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Broadening Experiences Through Reading in the Elementary School[1]

CONSTANCE M. McCULLOUGH[2]

The subject which I have been given might well be developed into a discussion of ways in which the child, laying his books end to end, can cover all the major areas of the globe and emerge with broadened knowledges, deepened understandings, more liberal attitudes, and a permanent stoop. You must forgive me for ignoring the twins in Siberia, the happy Chinese, and our brothers to the South, and for leaving such topics to those who have done them and can do them much better than I. I hope to escape the wrath of the program committee and yet deal with a topic which is prerequisite to broadening experiences through reading, the matter of broadening experiences *in* reading at all levels of development.

Whether we are on the brink of greater chaos than the world has ever known or greater harmony than the optimists have ever dreamed, it is important that our youth be given the tools with which to build a better life. If they must compete with others, we want them to be the best equipped. If, on the contrary, they are to be permitted to cooperate with others in pursuit of a common future, it is to the benefit of us all that their skills be developed to the fullest capacity. The skill of reading, which is the key to all book knowledge, should be perfected. A potential scientist, for instance, must not be discouraged as he often now is from the field of his greatest strength and greatest possible contribution because we have failed to teach him how to read science materials. If there is any purpose in human existence, we have a tremendously significant job to do. Are we doing it as well as we know how?

As long as parents remain ignorant of the evil effects of large classes upon the reading program, and, indeed, upon the whole educational system, as long as administrators think in terms of everything except the basic rein-

[1]An address given before the National Council of Teachers of English in Minneapolis, Nov. 23, 1945.

[2]Department of Education, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

forcement of a weakened structure, the major excuse for our failure is class size, the human impossibility of thorough individualization. The gifted teacher will continue to set impossible standards for the rest of us, and grouping will be praised as the panacea, the while it provides the veneer to hide the truth of undetermined heterogeneity; the fact will remain that we are handicapped even before we begin to teach, and thousands of children are doomed by a preventable situation to achieving less than their best.

Large classes are a major reason for our ineffectiveness. But aside from this and other organizational shortcomings, are there any classroom practices which militate against the reading program, any practices over which we can have complete control?

These practices reveal themselves in the kinds of cases which flood our reading clinics. One pattern of ailments is that of excellent oral reading in combination with poor silent reading. The child reads aloud beautifully, but is referred to the clinic because he cannot recall or interpret anything that he reads silently. Another pattern is that of excellent word analysis in combination with poor comprehension. The child can say "ox - fox" with the greatest of ease, but he does not attend to the relationship among words as he strings them along. He is the bead-stringing type of reader. Give him any bead and he can string it. Just don't ask him what kind of necklace he is making.

Then we have the fast reader who has an inaccurate idea of what he has read. He is very quick but careless; or the reader who is excellent in the use of phonics but unable to attack words to which phonics will not apply; or the reader who has remarkable sight vocabulary and no method of attacking new words except a very loose guess, or the one who can tell you all the details of his reading but who misses the main point or the significance of it all; or the one who is schooled in attack on word form but is poverty-stricken in sight vocabulary; or a child who can read his story book but can't tell a thing about geography.

These are a few of the kinds of imbalance which we find among children in a reading clinic. Surely father and mother, childhood diseases, and the imp in children are not entirely to blame. Part of that responsibility rests with us. We know this because we know what happens when a reading test is given in a large school. Two teachers of two comparable groups of children will come out with very different results. The one will swear that "children of that age cannot be expected to" do whatever it is, while the teacher of the other group will have shown that it is possible. Or the one teacher will have remarkable results in some skills and poor results in others, while the second teacher will have maintained an average in most of the skills.

Some people actually believe, for instance, that children in the first grade cannot generalize or reason. Yet it is well established that even younger children can, within their awareness of their environment, do these types of thinking. And casual observation has for years revealed these abilities in such first grade remarks as "I like school," a generalization based upon several experiences, or "Miss Soandso doesn't like me," a conclusion based upon reasoning. Schools which hold that children cannot generalize or reason tend to stress reading for details and word drills fostering a robot response. The child reads the print off the page and mouths it back to the teacher. His thinking apparatus is checked until recess. At the rate of five hours a day, it is in danger of being checked for life.

Perhaps the root of the trouble with our reading program is a matter of emphasis. We

fail to give attention to the fullness of meaning in the word "reading." Reading is not sight vocabulary, it is not word analysis, it is not semantics, it is not getting details from the printed page, it is not speed, and it is not critical thinking. Reading is the richness of many elements at any so-called stage of development. True, a sight vocabulary has an urgency at the beginning of reading that seems to decline toward the junior high school; but there is no beginning of "reading" unless everything that reading is, as well as the development of a sight vocabulary, is taking place. And there is likewise no turning-point in the reading program at which we can say, "Here endeth the acquisition of a sight vocabulary."

What are the features of a reading program which we must foster at all levels if a balanced reading development is to take place?

We obviously cannot teach a child to read the symbols of reality if he is ignorant of the reality. Therefore, vocabulary-meaning development is an aspect of reading which requires constant care. In the early reading materials, ideas are apt to deal with common environment. At this stage, vocabulary development is largely a matter of checking on and providing for the child's acquaintance with the spoken counterparts of the symbols he is to read, especially his appreciation of the variety of meanings a common word may have. Later, as the reading vocabulary becomes more complex, with the addition of words that are complete strangers and common words used in strange ways, there is even greater need, if that is conceivable, for the activities, excursions, and visual materials which clarify concepts. The child begins to notice that authors see certain common things in uncommon ways, and that the very sounds of words can make an idea more vivid. But these later, enriching features of vocabulary start in small, casual ways, as in the spontaneous choral reading of a loved nursery rhyme in kindergarten.

Another continuous part of the reading program is the acquisition of a sight vocabulary. At all levels this requires the same basic conditions: meaning must be well established and then associated with form; the form must be learned through the sense avenues of sight, sound, and touch; and the word form must appear in a meaningful setting at frequent intervals so as to be well established and retained in memory. It is easy to see the difficulties besetting the establishment of a sight vocabulary in the old-type geography books: the meanings were often strange, the sounds of the words were seldom associated with the reading of the forms, and the forms were not repeated frequently enough to insure retention. Yet, some teachers provided a readiness for certain of the meanings, wrote on the board as the class discussed the subject, gave the children opportunity to use the words in class discussion and written reports, and provided experience in recognition of the words in supplementary reading. It is also easy to see why a child must advance at his own pace if his sight vocabulary is to develop normally. A child who is started too soon and is dragged by the hair through a concentration of strange words finds himself in the wrong concentration camp, with insufficient time to devote to the learning of any given word.

Certainly word analysis is another matter for continuous learning. It is begun in the kindergarten with games of visual, auditory, and tactile discrimination. It should constantly progress in step with the individual child's ability to see certain likenesses and differences in sound and shape. Its increasingly detailed consideration should not be forced upon a child until he has given evidence of

the necessary skill in discrimination. But neither should one phase of it be exploited to the neglect of the other phases.

A child, then, should be encouraged in all aspects of word analysis. He should be watchful for the appearance of familiar parts, from early observation of a known word within an unknown word, and singular and plural endings, to the later study of prefixes and suffixes. If he sees a small word within a larger word, and if that small word aids him in the solution of the larger word, he should not be restrained by the technical consideration of whether it is cricket to see "rain" in "train," or just "rain" in "raindrop." Speed and accuracy in word analysis are of greater importance than the sanctity of a consonant blend. The sounds of initial consonants, rhyme endings, consonant blends, and vowel combinations should be gradually employed when and as they are useful. Syllabication is another phase of word form solution which can be begun in a small way with shorter, known compounds.

Throughout this work, the child should be constantly encouraged to check his solution of the word with its position in the sentence. Too often we meet both children and adults who are satisfied to read nonsense. If there are context clues to the meaning and identity of the strange word, the child should be taught to use them.

The word analysis program cannot survive as an isolated drill apart from its function in the reading of books. The teacher who anticipates every new word and drills on its recognition before the reading of the lesson is working too arduously in the cause of a better sight vocabulary. It would be better from the standpoint of word analysis if she would introduce as new forms only those words which she knows the children cannot solve alone, leaving to the children the solution-inhabitat of those new words which they have the tools to solve. Throughout our work in word analysis we need to be opportunists, holding in mind constantly the breadth of the skills we wish to foster, and the realization that one of our reading goals is independence and versatility in word attack.

When we come to the problem of comprehension, we come to battle-scarred territory. All we have to do to be frightened these days, now that the war is over, is to look at the baffling lists of comprehension skills which we are supposed to teach. To top these, we are told that there are two types of reading, study-type and story-type. With only about thirteen other subjects to teach besides reading, we should be forgiven for throwing up our hands and sulking in our reading circles. But, amid shouts of "heretic," we must admit that there are simpler ways of looking at comprehension.

All composition appears to be based on facts or details, arranged in some logical or chronological order, and assembled to compose a main idea or impression. Details are the bricks of the structure of all thought. We must have something to think with before we can think. So, the facts the author thinks with are one important part of comprehension. We must teach children how to read for them.

But details, in and of themselves, have no importance. Asking questions of detail on a passage read by the class is one of the most meaningless of our academic practices. The teacher has no reasonable motive as a thinker for asking the questions, and the children have scarcely to quiver a brain-cell to answer. It is little better than a sight vocabulary test, which might be handled more directly in a flashcard drill or blackboard work. It is second only to the yes-no question, which has taught more gambling than it ever taught reading.

How, then, are we to give exercise in

reading for details? We must do it through another aspect of comprehension. One of these is the main thought of a paragraph, of a story, of a section, or of a chapter. A main idea is a structure built upon a number of orderly details. And it is a relative matter. The main idea of a paragraph may be a detail of a chapter, just as a chapter may be a detail in the structure of a book. But the main idea has the dignity of requiring a certain amount of thinking. As the good reader reads a paragraph, he is adding up details to see what he can get as a main idea by himself; or he is mentally comparing the details with the statement of main thought which the author has given. He is having to think. As occasional authors, children can see the sense to a question like, "What would be another good title for this story?" As specialists in living, they appreciate a question like, "What kind of boy was Soandso?" These questions bring out main impressions. The additional question, "Why?", requires the presentation of a few pertinent details. In this way, the reader's grasp of details is demonstrated without being given undue prominence in the class discussion.

Another aspect of comprehension is sequence or outlining. The question, "How did suchandsuch a thing happen?" brings out the orderly sequence of details in the story. Outlining, which is the more complex fruition of sequential thinking, involves the evaluation of events or ideas as more important or less important, main or subordinate. An awareness of sequence, chronological or logical, is crucial to the adequate comprehension of many kinds of subject-matter. We must certainly stress this, as well as the main idea and details, in our teaching.

So we have it that details build sequences and main ideas. These are all we find for comprehension on the printed page. All the rest of understanding is up to us. What we *do* with main ideas, sequence, and details is the burden of all other reading comprehension, which we might call, as does Professor Strang of Columbia, "creative reading." The author doesn't do it; *we* do it. We create the understanding beyond details, sequence, and main ideas, by thinking with them. We draw conclusions, we infer, we see cause and effect, we make comparisons, and we see what relation the author's ideas bear to our own living. If we did not do these things, reading would be an evil thing in our hands, for we should be reading and accepting without evaluation. So certainly we must foster creative reading as well as the other parts of comprehension. And a question like, "Would you like to have Soandso for a friend?" "Why?", makes sense to children.

There is one distortion of this last question which we might well consider: the question, "Why would Soandso make a good friend?" Here the teacher, as a reader, has gathered facts which, to her, add up to the idea that Soandso would make a good friend. So what does she do? She asks the children to look back through the material to figure out how she arrived at her own conclusion. Of all procedures, this is the one most likely to succeed through the looking-glass. Wonderful nonsense under the cloak of education, it requires a complete reversal of the normal reading procedure and denies the children the right of drawing their own conclusions, of doing their own creative reading.

Another fact that we know about comprehension is that we get from reading largely what we look for. A person with a new Easter bonnet will read the weather report to see if it will rain, and will get that detail from her reading. A person reading to compare Florida weather with Minnesota's will do creative reading with the facts about the temperatures in the two localities. A landscape photographer will read to find the ex-

pression "slightly cloudy," to infer interesting cloud effects. Even when we start to read to kill time, we continue reading only if a purpose for reading is given us or occurs to us in the first lines. If drowsiness is stronger than the desire to find out "who dun it," we drop the purposeful reading of a detective story in favor of purposeful sleeping.

These facts suggest that there must be a motive for reading suitable to the kinds of comprehension we wish to develop. In the early grades, motives are set through a discussion of experiences and pictures, but soon become the outgrowth of class discussion of titles and characters and probable turns in the story. The teacher who dismisses the assignment with the command, "Read the next four pages," deserves all the bad answers she gets in the following recitation.

Now, what about story-type and study-type reading? This appears to be an innocent question; yet the answer holds several implications. If there is a distinct difference between story-type and study-type reading, what business have we to use solely story-type reading to develop reading skills? And how can we assure skill in reading science and social studies materials of the usual high school types if we train children only on the fictionalized science and social studies materials of the elementary school? Such a difference would seem to demand considerable alteration in our reader series or at least the addition of other types of material in the reading lessons.

The facts seem to be these: The kinds of comprehension demanded by textbooks of science, history, and other subjects are basically no different from those used in the understanding of stories such as we find in the reader series and in children's story books. There is not a reading subject in which all four kinds cannot operate. Furthermore, many science and history materials contain what the children would call "stories," while some stories contain grocery lists, recipes, experiments, and the like. Poetry and mathematics have in common a compactness of expression which requires careful reading not usual in "story-type" material. Yet again, all verse and all mathematics books are not so compactly written. And the problem in reading most history books is not to remember everything but to select the right things to remember.

Therefore, we cannot say that a given subject contains only one type of material, and that distinct from any other. Materials do not differ in ingredients so much as in the proportions of those ingredients. But the more adjustments the reader has to make as he reads a subject, the more difficult that subject is to read unless he has been taught to adjust his reading to the problems the material presents. Adjustment to these changing reading requirements must be taught, but of course cannot be taught without the different kinds of materials requiring these different approaches. The reason we must have teachers of reading at every level and in every subject is that new problems of vocabulary and reading adjustment appear with every new book and must be dealt with as they come. The problem of readiness for new reading situations pursues us throughout the reading program.

No discussion of a balanced program of reading could be concluded without a word about the place of oral and silent reading. The essence of the findings on the subject is that oral reading, to be well developed, must be frequent, must be prepared in advance in silent reading, and, above all, must be functional. The game of reading around the room to see who will lose the place and have to stay after school has been put down as another

meaningless time-killer, and has been proved actually detrimental to the development of good reading habits. As for fluency and speed in silent reading, nature will usually take care of them if we provide a diet of easy, interesting, silent reading to supplement the harder and necessarily slower silent reading.

A meaning vocabulary, a basic sight vocabulary, a comprehensive word analysis program, four major areas of comprehension, provision for purposeful and adjusted reading, functional oral reading, and a combination of easy, silent reading for fluency and harder, silent reading for growth—these are considerations for every level. But we cannot expect a balanced development without some means of determining the proportions of time and emphasis which will produce it. If we are to approach an ideal, we must have appropriate means of evaluation.

For the past two years the Cleveland Public Schools have been revising their primary reading tests in an attempt to bring the testing program into line with the new teaching materials. As you know, the Cleveland levels system of promoting children at their own rate of reading growth has been in successful operation for a dozen years under the leadership of Margaret L. White, the language arts supervisor. From six to eight books of about equal difficulty are read in a given series of levels, at the conclusion of which tests are given to determine the child's readiness for the next series of levels. The new tests are based upon the actual readings in these books, the actual vocabularies, and the actual word analysis problems and opportunities which the books present. Each test covers achievement in one of the skills which I have just outlined as essential to balanced reading development. The tests require several periods to administer, and in length and diagnostic value are quite a departure from previous tests in this area. The resultant profile of individual skills shows the teacher what kinds of development she has achieved and exactly the respects in which Johnny's work is not up to his best. Johnny, meanwhile, has had an experience of several days in which to reinforce his learnings by an additional exposure to familiar reading situations, and in which to exercise his abilities to read for different comprehension purposes.

I cannot share with some of our speakers in this convention a great satisfaction with the gains we have made in reading, when I see what still remains to be accomplished. Nor can I divorce in my mind the skills of reading from the great human purposes which reading skills can serve. I cannot with integrity pass over the fact that our present skills program is in many instances a hodgepodge of the techniques and conflicting views of divers reader series, syllabi, specialists, and a confused tradition. I cannot look for human intelligence to build a better world until I see the better tools which will permit the efficient exercise of human intelligence.

A balanced program of development, an evaluation program reflecting this balance, and a keen sense of responsibility to maintain it, are to my mind the prime needs in our basic reading program. We cannot broaden experiences through reading unless we underlay these experiences with a sound skills development. Meanwhile, if the junior and senior high schools take their reading responsibilities as seriously as do the elementary schools, and I am trying hard to believe they will, the norms of our present standardized reading tests will be outstripped by our students' performance, the lion will lie down with the lamb, we shall have done almost as well as we know how, and we may retire a few years hence with the satisfaction of having been worthy of a part in education.

New Horizons for the Language Arts

JOHN J. DEBOER[1]

The history of language arts instruction in American elementary schools has been one of steadily expanding horizons. In colonial days, the language arts were regarded simply as a body of skills in reading and writing. In the early 19th century, reading took on important functions in the moral education of the young and in the development of patriotism. In the later decades, a literary and cultural emphasis became apparent in the reading, composition, and elecutionary activities. The 20th century witnessed the expansion of the language arts to include the entire range of childhood interests and experiences.

Today we are trying to combine the values of all the earlier periods in our language arts materials and objectives. Skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening are, according to all the evidence, more effectively taught today than ever before. Though the newer readers have abandoned the obvious moralizing of the Blue-Back Speller, they definitely aim at the development of constructive social attitudes and an appreciation of national ideals. And in very recent years the trend has been strong toward the inclusion of literary material, although the selections have been from children's rather than adult literature.

By way of parenthesis it should be remarked that the widening scope of the language arts program has not affected all the children of the land. Millions of American boys and girls are being deprived of even the simplest and narrowest type of language arts education envisioned by the colonial fathers. The average annual per capita expenditure for the education of Negro children in one state, for example, is $7.00. The recent Lawler-Norton study of educational expenditures in the United States has shown that large areas of our nation are still virtually educational deserts.

Even in communities in which more substantial funds are available for education, the language arts program has in many instances hardly emerged from the colonial stage of exclusive emphasis on the skills of literacy. Large classes, meager equipment, and inadequately educated teachers are responsible for the pathetically limited scope of the language arts in thousands of the nation's schools. The battle for decent free schools for all American children and youth has by no means been won. The nation's teachers of English have a special responsibility in supporting such legislation as is now before Congress to provide federal aid to education.

While at one end of the scale Americans are struggling for a bare minimum in educational opportunity for children and youth, at the other end teachers are surveying the extraordinary progress in school practice made through three centuries, and moving forward toward still newer horizons. Recent publications and reports of pioneer experiments in the schools suggest at least three promising developments in the language arts.

[1]Chairman of the department of education at the Roosevelt College of Chicago, past president of the Council, and editor of the *Elementary English Review*. This address was delivered at the opening session of the Council's Minneapolis convention, Nov. 22, 1945.

First of these is the cultivation of a new attitude toward language itself. Children are led to regard words as symbols dependent upon prior experience and upon psychological and verbal context for their meaning. In a sense this emphasis is as old as Comenius and probably much older. But we now realize more fully that the continuous study of words in isolation from direct experience and without a constant checking with concrete realities interferes not only with comprehension in reading but with sound thinking as well. Much adult prejudice and superstition results from a habit of escaping from the real world into a realm of purely subjective, verbal relations.

The functional approach to the study of language as described in numerous recent publications involves at least five useful concepts:

1. *The learner must know how to distinguish clearly between word and fact, between symbol and reality.* Not only do the uses of words change, but the realities to which they refer are in a constant state of change. By careful documenting and dating of our statements, and by insistence upon specific localization of a person's statements, we achieve greater clarity of meaning. For younger learners particularly this concept calls for an abundance of direct experience as background for the speaking, listening, reading, and writing situations.

2. *The learner must know how to distinguish clearly between language that describes a speaker's feelings, judgments, and opinions, and language which describes objective fact.* The ability to make such distinctions is of particular importance in the reading of editorialized news in the daily press and in listening to radio news and comment today. Much of the finest literature encountered in school is descriptive of the poet's or novelist's moods or value-patterns and must be understood as personal response rather than dispassionate reporting of realities.

An excellent illustration of such a distinction occurred in a group discussion carried on by high school pupils in a demonstration at the Columbus meeting of the Council. The topic was a union dispute over the manufacture of musical recordings. The teacher pointed out that the manufacturer's receipts are known as a *profit*, the salesman's as a *commission*, the artist's as a *royalty*, the studio director's as a *fee*, the laboratory worker's as a *wage*, the executive's as a *salary*, but the union's as a *cutback*. Most of these terms are objective designations, but the last implies a judgment.

3. *The learner must know how to recognize shifts of meaning in words.* One does not necessarily apply the same logic to expressions which are similar in form. For example, a different set of relationships is involved in the case of a patient going *under the knife* than is true in the case of an antique table going *under the hammer*. Moreover, the same word may acquire different meanings even within the same discourse. Not only changing convention in word usage, but context, previous experience, and present intention determine meaning in specific cases.

4. *The learner must know how to guard against unwarranted generalizations.* Just as the meaning of a word depends on its use in specific situations, so our judgments of situations and of people should be based on individual cases. We do not condemn all school janitors because the janitor on our floor never cleans the blackboards. We do not assume that all Mexicans are lazy because the Mexican next door refuses to work. We do not avoid all fire insurance because one company proved unreliable.

5. *The learner must know how to keep his judgments tentative.* He must recognize

the fact that we can have only partial knowledge about anything, and that our judgments may change when we have more evidence or more experience or when we examine a problem from a new vantage point. On many questions there are not two sides, but many sides. People are not usually either all good or all bad. Ideas are not usually either all right or all wrong. And language can usually give us only a more or less workable approximation of the facts.

This principle must of course be applied with caution. Both children and adults must often choose between yes and no, between one direction and another. Open mindedness must not be carried to the point of intellectual stalemate or the indefinite suspension of belief. But the elementary school has, either because of the credulity of young children or the arrogance of adults, suffered most from the extremes of dogmatism. It can well afford to encourage a greater degree of skepticism and critical-mindedness.

The five concepts just enumerated, when combined with a more realistic treatment of questions of usage, could change elementary school language study from what is now frequently the dullest of school subjects into one of the most exciting areas of exploration. Suggestions for specific application of such concepts to the language arts curriculum and new functional materials are needed before such a change can be accomplished widely in the classrooms of the nation.

A second new challenge to the language arts is the use of reading and language expression in promoting children's emotional health. From many parts of the country teachers report that young children increasingly turn to them for the security which they often apparently cannot get at home. In a new sense the teacher stands *in loco parentis*. She learns to be a patient listener. She knows that her kindness and sincere interest may be for some children the only dependable support in an otherwise hostile or indifferent world. And so she encourages children to talk or write about themselves or about imaginary children who are troubled or confused like themselves. She knows the right word to say to them when misunderstanding threatens to undermine their confidence in people whose friendship they need.

Using spoken or written language to help achieve personal adjustment requires great skill, and is a dangerous undertaking for inexperienced or partially informed teachers. But for these there is a ready resource, which requires only a sympathetic interest in children and a wide knowledge of children's books. We are realizing increasingly that mere free reading for its own sake has little value beyond the improvement of certain types of reading skill and may in some cases be injurious. But when children's reading is guided in directions which lead to clearer understanding of human relations, to a more just appraisal of one's own status or one's own scheme of values, it becomes a major instrument in the building of wholesome personality.

The supply of books for children of all ages which deal with every-day problems in human relations is already abundant, and scores of new ones are appearing each month. For the child who is self-conscious or despondent because she is larger or taller than her age-mates, there is Elsie Glenn's *Amandus Who Was Too Big* (Macrae-Smith), for little children, or Rachel Field's *Hepatica Hawks* (Macmillan), for adolescents. For the adopted child there is Carolyn Hayward's *Here's A Penny* (Harcourt), or Doris Gates' *Sensible Kate* (Viking). The child who has difficulty in accepting a step-father or step-mother may find Amy Stone's *P-Penny and His Little Red*

Cart (Lothrop), or Eliza White's *Four Young Kendalls* (Houghton) helpful. The shy child will get encouragement from Marjorie Torry's *Penny* (Howell), or Dorothy Bird's *Granite Harbor* (Macmillan). Brother-sister relationships, especially those affecting the acceptance of younger brothers and sisters, supply the theme for many fine juvenile publications, of which Bernice Bryan's *Pedie and the Twins* (Whitman), Marjorie Flack's *Wait for William* (Houghton), and Alice Dagliesh's *Young Aunts* (Scribner), for younger children, Carol Ryrie Brink's *Caddie Woodlawn* (Macmillan) and Elizabeth Enright's *Saturdays* (Farrar), for the middle group, and William Heyliger's *Gridiron Glory* (Appleton) and Anna E. Stebbins' *Small Flags Waving* (Dutton), for the junior high school age, are but a few examples. A booklist which classifies children's publications according to such themes as these is found in the recent pamphlet *Character Formation through Books*, compiled by Clara J. Kircher, and published by the Catholic University of America Press.

With the arrival of a new phase of the human adventure in this troubled and terrifying postwar world, still another new horizon for the language arts now stretches before us. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening in school must now lead systematically to the development of attitudes and understandings demanded by the vastly altered conditions of our world. Specifically, they should lead to an increased hospitality to ideas and to people.

We have now learned that the ancient principles of human brotherhood are more than moral precepts—they are conditions of survival. The language arts are woven into our patterns of thought and into personality itself. They hold one of the major keys to peace and progress in the generations to come. Through them we must consciously build in children and youth the universality of interest and sympathy that our global interdependence demands.

Too many young people now leave our schools and colleges with circumscribed motives and provincial loyalties. The atomic bomb has not shaken them. They are moved by great hatreds. They dislike Negroes, Jews, foreigners, the poor (whom they regard as ignorant or improvident), labor, social reformers, bureaucrats, Great Britain, Russia, and all Orientals, who in their judgment constitute the Yellow Peril. If intelligence tests measured their capacity for liking people they would score very low. Yet many of them have enviable scholarship records in school.

If the effect of their limitations were merely to warp their own personalities, there might not be cause for great alarm. But these products of democracy's schools translate their hatred and contempt for human beings into action. They support restrictive covenants which bottle up Negroes in America's ghettoes. They encourage race strikes in our high schools. By innuendo and conscious or unconscious libel they foment anti-semitism and religious bigotry. They seize upon every real or imagined international quarrel to predict a supposedly inevitable holocaust. They are the Irresponsibles who set the stage for war, and then denounce the "warmakers" for not isolating America from the world.

In this condition lies our weakness and our task. Though we haven't taught our grammar too well, we can definitely show that we are improving in the teaching of language form. Though we haven't taught our reading too well, especially in view of the challenge of modern times, we know that children read better today than they did 25 years ago. Though we haven't done a great deal with instruction in listening, we are making a good beginning. But we have made

little or no progress in enlarging the scope of our children's acceptance of people.

This is of course no plea for the indiscriminate acceptance either of people or ideas. We *must* discriminate both among people and among ideas. But to discriminate against an idea because of a label or stereotype, and against a person because of his race, religion, nationality, or occupation is to confess that we are neither morally nor intellectually ready for life in the era that is upon us.

Good progress, though on a limited scale, is being made in adapting the educational program to the new needs. The N.C.T.E. has excellent committees at work on international and intercultural relations. The American Council on Education has embarked on an ambitious and promising project in this field. The Bureau for Intercultural Education, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Council against Intolerance in America, University workshops, school system lke those of Springfield, Massachusetts and Detroit and special committees on race relations all over the country are attacking the problem intelligently and vigorously. But until and unless they can reach the rank and file of classroom teachers throughout the country in a relatively short time, their efforts may be too late.

One of the common approaches to the problem of stimulating a wider appreciation of human beings of all kinds is the study of the contributions made by the various minorities to American life. Such study is worthwhile in building the confidence of the minorities themselves, and may frequently be effective in improving intergroup relations. But we must not base our program exclusively on this approach. Children must learn to accept human beings of all kinds on their merits, not because of the achievements of their ancestors. They must accord equality to all groups of Americans, not because these groups have heroic or distinguished or talented representatives, but simply because they are Americans.

A very good illustration of the latter approach is found in a new little book for primary grade children, called *Two Is a Team*, and written by Loraine and Jerrold Beim (Harcourt). The story tells of two boys who found that they could make a better wagon if they worked together. They did make a wagon, and took turns riding in it. Nowhere in the story is any mention made of the fact that the one boy was white and the other Negro. The attractive illustrations reveal quite incidentally that the two children happen to differ in skin color. But so far as the story is concerned, the characters are just two boys who accept each other as friends.

The list of such children's books is growing. John R. Tunis, Joseph Gollomb, Lavinia R. Davis, Irmengarde Eberle, Eleanor Estes, Carol Ryrie Brink, Kate Seredy, Gregor Felsen, Doris Gates, Lois Lenski, Armstrong Sperry, Arna Bontemps, Pearl Buck, and Howard Fast are only a few of the writers who have put their extraordinary talents to work for the expansion and deepening of children's appreciation of people.

Reading material useful in developing such appreciation may often be found in the most unexpected places. In the following episode from *Yankee Thunder, the Legendary Life of Davy Crockett*,[2] Davy and his friend Ben Hardin find themselves on a South Sea island, surrounded by hostile natives.

"Those South Sea folks were black as Pennsylvania coal. They were all dressed in grass skirts and nothing much else besides. Every one of them carried a long spear, and

[2]By Irwin Shapiro. New York: Julian Messner, 1944. Pp. 153-157. Quoted by the kind permission of the publishers.

they were howling and carrying on something fearful.

" 'Look out, Davy,' hollered Ben Hardin, rattling at the knees. 'They're worse than red Injuns!'

" 'Don't you worry none,' said Davy. 'I never had no trouble with red Injuns, and I don't look for none with these folks here. I'll take care o' this.'

"The South Sea folks started pushing Davy and Ben Hardin away, giving them a jab with their spears to show they meant business. The next thing Davy and Ben Hardin knew they'd been hauled up in front of the Chief. The South Sea folks kept crowding around, jabbering away in South Sea language. Davy listened hard and he soon got the hang of it. Seemed the folks had never seen white men before. Half a dozen old grandpas standing near the Chief were saying a white man wasn't worth having around, and Davy and Ben ought to be killed off without any more fuss.

" 'Hold on there, Chief!' roared Davy in South Sea language. 'For I'm Davy Crockett, Colonel in the army and Congressman from Tennessee in the United States! I'm half horse, half alligator, with a little touch o' snappin' turtle! Look out, for I'm a ring-tailed roarer, and I'm gettin' ready to roar!'

" 'Glad to meet you, Davy,' said the Chief. 'All the same, it won't do you no good to roar. You're a white man, and we got no use for 'em in these parts.'

" 'Don't waste your time talkin', Chief,' said the old grandpas. 'Kill 'em off.'

"Ben Hardin got wind of what was going on and turned whiter than a clean sheet.

" 'Think o' somethin', Davy,' he said. 'And think of it fast.'

" 'No need to worry,' said Davy, and turned back to the Chief. 'Looky here, Chief,' he said, 'down where I come from we don't kill off nobody without givin' them a trial. It wouldn't be fair and square.'

" 'Don't listen to him, Chief!' yelled the grandpas. 'He's just tryin' to talk his way out.'

" 'Now wait a minute,' said the Chief. 'I can't have anybody sayin' I ain't fair and square. You go ahead and fix up a trial, Davy. I'll try anything once.'

" 'Thank you, Chief,' said Davy. He picked out twelve of the South Sea folks for the jury, got one old grandpa to be the lawyer against him, and asked the Chief to be judge.

" 'I'll be lawyer for myself and Ben Hardin,' said Davy. After he'd told them all what they had to do, he said, 'GO AHEAD!'

"The old grandpas kept grumbling, but the Chief hushed them up.

" 'Order in this here court!' he hollered, just the way Davy had told him. 'Now get on with the trial.'

"First one to talk was the old grandpa who was the lawyer against Davy.

" 'Gents o' the jury,' he said, 'this here trial is nothin' but a lot o' folderol. Ain't none o' us ever seen a white man before, but you only got to take one look to see they ain't like us. And if they ain't like us, they ain't worth a busted cocoanut, and they shouldn't ought to be kept alive. Our pas and grandpas never had no white men on this here South Sea island—and what was good enough for them is good enough for us. Gents o' the jury,' I'm askin' you to kill off Davy Crockett and Ben Hardin. That's all I got to say.'

"There was some cheering after that, especially among the grandpas. Ben Hardin shook so hard he almost trembled off his kneecaps.

" 'Shiver me mizzen, Davy,' he said. 'It looks we're sunk for good.'

"Davy just gave him a laugh and started in talking.

" 'Gents o' the jury,' he said, 'I ain't goin' to make no long speech. I'm just goin' to tell you a little somethin' of how we do things back in the good old United States, where I come from. After that it'll be up to you to say if Ben and me ought to be killed off or not.'

"Then Davy didn't do anything but speak the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. He knew it all by heart, the same as if he had it written down on paper. He went through it from beginning to end without skipping a single word. And when he got through, he said, 'Any questions?'

" 'Just say that first part over again,' said the Chief. 'I kind o' like it.'

"Davy said the first part over again and asked once more, 'Any questions?'

"For a little while there wasn't a sound. Then the South Sea folks let loose a cheer, with some of the grandpas joining in.

" 'Order in this here court!' yelled the Chief. 'Gents o' the jury, what have you got to say?'

" 'No two ways about it,' said the jury. 'Ain't any one man better than the next, no matter if he's black, white, or any which color. We ain't goin' to kill off Davy and Ben Hardin.'

"The folks let loose another cheer, hollering, 'Hurrah for the jury! Hurrah for Davy! Hurrah for Ben Hardin!'

" 'What did I tell you, Ben?' said Davy. 'I knew there couldn't nobody hold out against the Declaration o' Independence and the Constitution o' the United States.'

"While the cheering was still going on, the Chief called for a frolic. The South Seas folks began dancing, singing their own songs and beating out the time on drums. Davy and Ben Hardin danced beside them, doing everything from a reel to a square-toed double trouble shuffle. The South Sea folks were mighty pleased with their dancing. Even the old grandpas said it would have been a shame to kill off two steppers like that."

This new development in language arts work is therefore not merely a theoretical objective. It has been underway, though on a small scale, for five years and more and is rapidly growing. Perhaps the next decade will determine whether it will grow rapidly enough to avert annihilation for us all. Much will depend on our ability to read correctly the signs of the times.

In this desperate race, we have so little time and so few allies. The vast competition in atomic armaments is already beginning. In the radio programs to which the children listen several hours each day, literally with bated breath, in the daily press, and in the super-popular comic books, the hateful and ridiculous stereotypes of human beings of alien culture continue to poison our reservoirs of good will. Yet if the schools of the nation were united in a determined, intelligent, day by day effort to create unity at home and a genuinely cooperative attitude toward other nations, they could still win. If the new Curriculum Commission of the National Council should place human unity high on its list of objectives, it can measurably contribute to the victory of human values over the forces of destruction now abroad in the world.

A Guided Program in Reading

KATHLEEN C. AMMERMAN[1]

In the time that we have to chat together, I shall try to give you a brief over-view of the phases of the "Guided Reading Program" which we consider fundamental in Glencoe, not because I believe that we have all the answers, but because that happens to be the subject assigned to me. In doing this, I should like to pay tribute, not only to those teachers who have worked so tirelessly to raise our standards and achievements in reading, but also to Ruby Schuyler, who as our Curriculum Counsellor has directed this work for eight years. She really should be the one to stand before you today.

Perhaps I can best make myself clear by listing those steps in the guidance of children's reading which we consider of paramount importance; then try to elucidate each step briefly. Of course, we all realize that volumes could be, in fact already have been, written about each phase.

Phases to be considered—

- Knowing Children
- Readiness
- Individual Differences
- Techniques of Reading
- Motivation
- Types of Reading Experience
- Interpretation and Evaluation
- Leisure Reading
- Testing Program
- Promotion Policy

Knowing Children

I wish I could find some way to express this without using that overworked expression, "the whole child." But at the moment, it is the only term at my command which seems to convey my meaning. At no age level is it possible for a child to learn to read in an air-tight compartment. The sincere teacher of reading wants to know all the facts about him, about his emotional, physical, social, and experiential background and adjustment. Then she seeks to use all these as the foundation upon which to build his reading interests and habits, capitalizing the strong points and striving to strengthen the weak. There seems to be universal agreement on one point, at least, about the teaching of reading, and that is that a child's first reading experiences should be successful.

Readiness

It follows then that a child should not be forced to read until he is ready to read. Such readiness is hard to define. It includes far more than the ability to make a high score on certain tests. It implies a physical and mental maturity and control, as well as an interest and ability in reading. In the preschool years it is our responsibility to create for children an atmosphere which will inspire interest; to surround them with books and pictures which will catch and hold their attention; and to seek to establish the basis for certain fundamental reading skills, i. e.,

- Following from left to right, both in words and sentences
- Developing a sense of the sounds of words
- Using the voice to make meanings clear
- Understanding that words or groups of words can tell certain things
- Seeing likenesses and differences in words
- Developing the power and poise which make telling stories and experiences a satisfying experience.

[1]Principal of the Central School, Glencoe, Ill. This paper was read at the Minneapolis meeting of the National Council, Nov. 23, 1945.

It seems quite obvious that what is done or left undone at the age of two or three or five, must vitally affect both reading interest and progress when children reach that crisis in life known as the first grade. Beyond all that can be done in school to build for reading readiness, we believe that we have a responsibility in an almost untouched field—that of helping parents of pre-school children to realize the importance and the rewards of reading aloud with (not to) little children. Above all, we should be helping parents and teachers to choose stimulating, worthwhile material to read.

Gates has listed the fundamental skills to be developed in the primary grades as:

Reading words and sentences from left to right
Ability in the discrimination and use of sounds in words
Ability in oral activities
Foundations for silent reading, both work-type and recreatory.

In order to achieve these goals, we believe that we must do more than give training in the mechanics of reading. We try to plan continuous experiences and activities which will provide a backlog upon which children may base their understanding and interpretation of what they read. Only thus can we keep them "ready" to read material of increasing difficulty and interest.

At each succeeding level in the elementary school we strive continuously to expand this readiness, giving children guidance in:

Understanding the vocabulary in all areas of subject matter
Developing their ability to interpret and evaluate critically the material read in all these areas
Acquiring the ability to outline and organize material read and present it orally or in writing
Expanding the curiosity and desire for knowledge in each area.

This pre-supposes every teacher to be a teacher of reading, not just the primary or the English teacher.

Techniques of Reading

But, lest I be misunderstood, I do want to make a plea here that we recognize our obligation to teach children to read. It seems to me that many of the stumbling blocks of later years could be avoided, much "remedial work" would be unnecessary, and many of the synthetic devises used to arouse reading interests unneeded, if children were given the help they need learning the pure mechanics of reading while in the primary grades. Most of them come to school eager to read, but since we have discovered the importance of "individual differences," there is danger of keying our whole reading program down to the occasional "different" child, or of allowing it to drift along to the satisfaction of the rare child who reads in spite of us. Too often, we have assumed that all we had a right to do was to provide children with interesting experiences, then surround them with material to read about those experiences. If they did not read they were not "ready." We have been led to believe that a teacher could commit no greater sin than to try to teach an "unready" child to read.

Having to my own discredit many examples of the danger, as well as the hopelessness, of trying to force a truly "unready" child to read, I can readily understand how we have fallen easy prey to this theory. But I do believe that the great majority of little children are willing and able to read. Where we need to exercise our understanding is in the degree of help that they need. I know of no greater feeling of frustration than that which assails me when I watch a group of primary children milling around in chaos; nor any greater feeling of satisfaction than the

sight of an artistic teacher leading them step by step along the path of learning. The joy and security of the children in the latter case is in direct contrast to the dissatisfaction and uncertainty of the former.

In these early phases of reading experience I believe that we have been putting too much emphasis upon sight and not enough upon sound. Because we rebelled against the old type of abstract phonetics, as an end in itself, we threw the baby out with the bath. For a time one was looked upon with horror who suggested phonetic training or word analysis to help children who were making slow progress in reading. Because an occasional child with photographic sight memory needed no such help, it was assumed that all children could eventually learn to read fluently without it. This has proved just as erroneous as the theory that all children needed endless drill in abstract phonetics.

Even more dire in its results is the tremendous emphasis that has been placed on silent reading. Children need to read aloud in order to build basic vocabularies; to learn to attack new words; to learn sound discrimination; to use punctuation in interpretation; and to experience the pleasure of using their own voices in conveying meaning.

Individual Differences

It is evident that no discussion of readiness or teaching procedures can be separated from the individual differences in children. The one indispensable element in any phase of guidance, whether it be mental, emotional, physical, or academic, is the teacher who humbly and honestly seeks to understand each child; to recognize his unique abilities as well as his potential handicaps; to give satisfaction and security through developing the former while securing all possible help in discovering and eradicating the latter.

Motivation

Having found the individual abilities and needs of each child, our next responsibility is one of "motivation," which Webster defines as "providing an impulse or inducement." Without his own inner impulse, no person ever really succeeds in anything. Certainly we know that neither the ability to read, nor an interest in reading, is ever imposed from without, beaten into a child, as it were. The Dartmouth study seems to prove that the one essential element in overcoming serious reading handicaps is interest—the desire and will to read. Yet, sometimes this inner impulse is so deeply buried, or a child so blocked by obscure emotional or physical handicaps, that the task seems well-nigh insurmountable.

We know, too, that as a child grows older we must use all our ingenuity in competing with the environmental stimuli that pull children away from reading. Once reading was a child's chief leisure time activity. Now he can turn a dial and hear exciting (even hair-raising and blood-curdling) stories; the news comes to him in a blow by blow account as it happens ten thousand miles away; the movies offer him continual entertainment; he can even ride in a car or fly in an airplane, almost at will.

Different Types of Reading Experiences

Once a child's impulse to read has been stimulated, or we have found inducements to make reading enticing, we then face the next step, that of widening his horizon. Reading for recreation, for pure enjoyment, is important. It can be overdone, however. The habit of assimilating only easily read, highly entertaining material, can be so firmly established in childhood that the adult remains forever too mentally lazy to *read.* So we must strive for more varied reading interests from biography to encylopedias, from mysteries to the classics.

Interpretation and Evaluation

Again we must emphasize that the teaching of reading far transcends its mechanics. Nor is it the task of the primary teacher alone. Neither can it be accomplished in the elementary school. The secondary school and the college must assume far more responsibility than they have accepted in the past, if we are to be a literate nation in the highest sense. But the foundation must be laid in the elementary school for the habit of reading, the ability to interpret, and the will to evaluate critically.

Leisure Reading

Since we are working against such great odds in promoting reading as a leisure time activity, as well as a study habit, the influence of the classroom is not enough. The school library becomes a reading workshop. Our librarians consider children more important than clean, orderly rows of books. They try to know each child as an individual and help him select books that he can read, that he will understand and that he will find absorbing. They use all their ingenuity in expanding a child's interests, leading him to ever greener pastures.

Then, too, specific instruction is given in library techniques and in the use of every type of reference material. It is not taken for granted that children will learn all of these things in the casual use of the school library.

Indeed, we cannot stop there. We believe that elementary school children should learn to know and enjoy the public library; to extend their techniques and sources of information to include all public services which will offer material to satisfy their intellectual curiosity and offer them valuable information and entertainment.

Testing Program

It is with a bit of trepidation that I attempt to outline the testing program, which is a sort of bulwark for all the things we try to do in these other fields. I say "trepidation" because it is likely to become a bit tiresome. Then too, I am afraid that there is danger of seeming too "scientific" in the teaching of reading. Vocabulary lists, test scores, remedial aids and the like, all have their place, *but* adapted to the needs of each child; not so imposed that they threaten children's security and inhibit their emotional response.

Therefore, we rely upon tests in Glencoe as one of the many ways in which we attempt to evaluate a pupil's needs, as well as his progress. We use:

Preference Tests to discover preference (hand, foot, and eye) in the kindergarten if a child is ambidextrous or appears to be poorly coordinated. These same tests are administered to all first grade children. A more complete study is made for those who appear confused in their preference.

The Metropolitan Readiness Test is given at the beginning of the first grade. We find it useful in helping us to guide children in beginning reading. We also find a remarkably high correlation between the results of this test and a child's early achievement in reading.

The Kuhlmann-Anderson Group Intelligence Test is also given in the first year. If any discrepancy appears later between a child's score on this test and his progress in reading, it is followed by an individual Binet.

The Metropolitan Achievement Test is administered in the second and third years. When the result is unsatisfactory the case is carefully studied and plans made with teacher and parent to insure adequate help.

Gray's Oral Reading Paragraphs are used with all third year children and with any other individuals, if help is needed in judging progress or diagnosing difficulties.

The Monroe Aptitude and Achievement Tests are often used in the third year and above to help in diagnosing individual needs.

The Kuhlmann-Anderson Group Intelligence Test is administered again in the sixth grade. The results are studied in the light of a pupil's progress, as well of his score on the former test.

Iowa Tests of Skills are administered each year in grades fourth through eighth. The results are used as one measure of judging individual progress, as well as our success in meeting standardized goals.

Finally, a word should be added about our promotion policy. One could almost say that we have no retention, so hard do we fight it. No child is retained in first grade, except under most unusual circumstances. Rarely do we recommend another year in the second grade. If progress in reading is very slow, the parents are kept continually informed. Test results, teacher's judgment and all evidences of immaturity in every phase of development are thoroughly discussed. Special help is arranged as part of the school program. Tutoring under school supervision may be recommended in extreme cases. The Snellen Eye Test is used. For further evidence, tests may be given on the Betts' Telebinocular. Audiometer tests are given. The physical record kept by the school is examined. The school psychologist is consulted. Diagnosis is never made, but any deviation from the normal is referred to a physician, psychiatrist, or appropriate clinic.

If, after all this has been done, possible corrections made, and special help given, a child continues to have undue difficulty at the end of the third year, an added year in the primary is planned with the parents. Even then, we believe this to be an expedient for want of a better plan. If, as in rare cases, parents object seriously a trial is made in the fourth grade, on the theory that the emotional upheaval caused in a child, when his parents consider such a procedure a disgrace, is more detrimental to his well-being than lack of academic adjustment.

This year, for the first time, we have a number of combination groups, designed to break down grade levels. This grouping is based upon chronological age, physical, social, and emotional maturity. It is too early to predict, but at the moment it seems as if they represent a great step in educational advance. Not the least of their advantages is the opportunity which they provide for these children who could formerly only be retained.

There are many other fascinating aspects of this subject about which I should love to talk. It is fortunate for you that a limit has been set upon my time. There are two which I cannot bring myself to ignore. One is our heritage of poetry. Again, perhaps because many of us hated to memorize long, confusing passages of poetry, we have tried to make sure that children should not be so bored or burdened. But poetry can be so much fun. To be enjoyed it must be shared. In early childhood, certainly, it must be read aloud for the sheer delight of its rhyme and rhythm. Who among us has not a cherished memory of some little child with his first Mother Goose? Later when he reads poetry for content we should be sure that it is about something which a child has known or can feel or imagine. I have never known a child or a group of children who failed to respond to such poetry when it was shared by a sympathetic adult whose face and voice expressed the love of it. Too often, as with any artistic

experience, what we offer is too little and too late. The older child meets it with resistance because he has built up a concept that it is silly, sentimental, and far beneath his dignity. He has been denied the joy of the orderly steps toward appreciation and understanding. So he approaches poetry, or rhythm, or painting, or modelling, even singing, with no power of interpretation, freedom of expression, or feeling of appreciation.

Similarly, I believe that one of our greatest educational potentials is often neglected, the power of the dramatic. In almost every phase of a child's development and education this seems to be true. In the field of reading, which we are discussing, I feel sure that it is one of our ablest and most subtle means of interpretation. No child can express the thought in the printed word with body and voice, as children so love to do, unless he knows what he has read or has listened with keen attention to a reader.

Stephen Leacock was wont to say that "nobody reads anything—in America." As I watch our children trying to adapt themselves to the hectic round of scheduled activities in their overstimulating environment, I wonder if we are expecting the impossible of them. Except for two or three assigned library or free reading periods a week, if they are lucky, where does the average American child, certainly the city or suburban child, find time to read? He must fulfill his assigned obligations to school, Sunday School, choir practice, dancing, art lessons, after school sports and homework. Then he must pay tribute to the telephone, the comics, the movies, the radio, the automobile, even the airplane. Where then is the leisure, where the long, quiet twilight hours, the evenings before the fire, complete with apples and popcorn, that used to be ours for endless reading? Is there any way that we can give back to these children a little bit of the calm and quiet that is a component part of the joy of reading? We can only try, but I for one believe that it is worth all the wisdom and effort that we can bring to bear upon it. For where else can they gain so much knowledge of life and all that can happen to human beings; how else can their powers of sympathy, understanding, and judgment be so greatly enhanced; what else can make all the adventure and heroism, courage and bravery, defeat and despair of human experience live within them; or where else can they find all the beauty and mystery of the human spirit? Someone has called great books "those that quietly steal into you and make you different." I submit to you that it is our obligation, and it should be our joy, first, to help children learn to read, to interpret and to evaluate the printed page. Then, to share with them more and finer books with each passing year; books that will "steal into them and make them different;" books that will make them better persons, more fully equipped to understand one another; books that will make them better able to live together in the vortex of this rapidly changing civilization which is their heritage.

Word Movies in Bluebird Theatre

OLGA MUELLER[1]

Fairy Imagination was painted on one gold pillar of the stage in Bluebird Theatre. A fairy bell made of a painted bluebell (posy) tinkled, whereupon the picture of a pussywillow flashed upon the screen. The fairy touched the flower with her gold wand, the goldenrod, and lo, there appeared the picture of a soft, gray pussy. She then named the posy, 'pussywillow.' The audience saw the flower's likeness to the enchanted pussy; its image was associated with the name and the one would recall the other.

Fairy Imagination next turned the firefly into a spark of fire, the bleeding-heart, a red, heart shaped flower, into a heart that bled. A box turtle on the screen suddenly vanished, as if it had never been, and lo, there was a box. The picture of the red trumpet honeysuckle beside that of a tiny trumpet, which it resembled, made its glowing name set in a screen sentence unforgettable by associative memory. This slide will flash upon that "inward eye."

In this Fairyland Jack Frost painted the leaves, the magic stick (walking stick insect) walked. The butcher bird (shrike) was impaling a live mouse on thorns. The mouse deer, gray with hoofs the size of a dime, kicked Touch-me-not, whereupon this posy with a tiny pop angrily shot off seeds like bullets.

Jack-in-the-pulpit (plant) said to the mermaid, "Your fish tail is hideous," whereupon she snapped, "Equally hideous are your split legs."

The Venus flytrap grew here. Its interlocking spikes were created long before the spikes of the Iron Virgin closed upon a victim in the Nuerenberg torture chamber. Bruin was named from his brown color. The Fairy praised the piety of this bear, who went to church every Sunday—and ate up the congregation. The glowworm glowed; it was a love call to its mate. The Fairy sang, "Shine little glowworm, glimmer—." The lines imitated its light, now flashing, now vanishing.

The orchestra now started up with Bumblebee as the bassdrum. He almost drowned "Bob White," "Katy-did," and Gobbler's "Gobble!"

Daddy-long-legs now crawled across the screen. One spectator cried, "Daddy-long-legs," for there wasn't much else of him to name. Grasshopper hopped right into his name. The child likewise calls his cat "Meuo." The audience felt in imagination the smart weed and smelt the stink bug, a living jewel. The cardinal (bird) flew past and the ruby throated humming bird sparkled as did its jeweled name.

Fairy Imagination now gave each spectator a fairy gift, a glass prism. Through this prism of imagination the child would see words aglow.

Stalking into the Bluebird, a Gradgrind crushed the flowers and birds with barbarous names, 'helianthus,' etc. The bobolink ceased to call "Bobolink," the trumpet honeysuckle lost its honey sweet odor, and the gold fish wasn't golden anymore.

The name, 'sunflower,' proves to be spec-

[1]Formerly Americanization Supervisor, Minneapolis, Minn.

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Developing Readiness for Word Recognition

M. LUCILE HARRISON[1]

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROGRAM IN WORD PRONUNCIATION

Among the basic skills, which are looked upon as being of greatest significance to the successful carrying out of reading, are those which make possible the independent and correct pronunciation of each strange word met in any reading situation. These skills are important for a number of reasons. First, if they have been mastered, the whole character of the teaching program changes. The teacher no longer teaches each new word as a character separate and distinct from other sight words represented by other characters. Instead, except for non-phonetic words encountered, the pupil uses his skills of word analysis and determines for himself what the strange words are. Second, with independence gained from the successful use of such skills, the pupil can carry out and enjoy wide reading, the entire volume of which may be doubled or tripled. Third, if learned successfully in our schools, such independent skills of word analysis should reduce by 75 to 90 per cent the number of remedial reading cases, for experts in that field still agree that the most frequent cause of retarded reading is lack of skill in word analysis. For these outstanding reasons and others of less importance, pupils should very early be taught the skills which make it possible for them to determine independently what each strange word met in any reading situation may be.

II. THE NATURE OF THE PROGRAM

A well rounded program culminating in independence in word pronunciation will include four divisions, giving the pupil four means of getting at the correct pronunciation of a word. They are:

1. Training in the use of the context for determining what strange words are
2. Training in phonetic analysis
3. Training in structural analysis
4. Training in the use of the dictionary

These should be explained so that there will be no doubt as to the nature of each type of training held in the mind of the writer.

(1) Training in *The Use of the Context,* as it is related to these skills, teaches the pupil to use the familiar words surrounding the strange word to determine what the unfamiliar word is. For example, the pupil may come upon the passage:

"Where have you been?" asked Bob's mother. "Just look at your face!"

Bob looked at himself in the big ——— that hung on the wall.

He looked very funny.

Only one word can be inserted in the context and that one is not difficult for any English speaking child to determine. The child needs training in using this way of getting at the pronunciation of a strange word. The resulting ability can be used before any of the other independent means of pronouncing a strange word.

(2) *Training in Phonetic Analysis* teaches the pupil to pronounce a new word by first noting the familiar phonetic elements in

[1]Associate professor of elementary education, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley. This paper was read at the Minneapolis meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, Nov. 23, 1945.

it and then to arrive at the pronunciation of the strange word by blending the familiar elements to make a word which is familiar to the pupil by sound, but which was unfamiliar by sight. For example, the pupil may come upon the word "lavender" as a new word. Let us assume that the phonetic elements which make up the word are all familiar to the pupil. By blending the familiar sounds making up the word, its pronunciation can be determined correctly.

(3) *Training in Structural Analysis* teaches the pupil to note familiar parts of words and to arrive at the total word by putting the known parts together correctly. For example, the compound word, "Thanksgiving," is simple when its two familiar parts are noted. By learning to recognize the familiar words in compounds, the pupil no longer looks upon them as long and difficult words. Again, such words as "laughter" and "laughing" are easy when the pupil realizes that the root of each is the familiar word "laugh" to which have been added familiar endings. He will learn in structural analysis that these endings sound alike wherever they appear at the ends of words. By attaching the known endings to the familiar root, the variant of the word can be worked out easily and independently.

(4) *Training in the Use of the Dictionary*, as far as this discussion is concerned, teaches the child to determine how the strange word shall be pronounced by first finding the strange word in the orderly arrangement of the dictionary; then, by using its diacritical markings, noting the syllable divisions, and using the key to pronunciation given in the dictionary, he can determine its pronunciation.

Perhaps a fifth type of training should be added, namely *The Ability to Use a Composite of Two or More of These Means* of getting at the pronunciation of a strange word whenever two or more means are helpful. For example, two words may fit equally well into the context of a passage, as "pond" or "lake," but by noting the familiar initial consonant of the unfamiliar printed word, the pupil can easily decide which one to choose for the passage at hand.

These four means, with the possible fifth, constitute the divisions of the program. They are types of training which each child should have in order to achieve independence in word pronunciation whenever and wherever he may meet a strange word.

Few of us any longer have any doubt about the necessity of such a program for every child in our schools. But most teachers are still asking these questions:

1. When shall such a program be begun?
2. What specific teachings shall be carried out?
3. How shall they be taught?

III. When Shall Such a Program Be Begun?

Many reading experts agree that such a program as described must be started in the reading readiness period before actual reading of printed and written materials shall have begun. However, few teachers have done anything about such teachings at that early point. There are, nevertheless, important learnings from the program which can and should be taken care of in the reading readiness period and it is well established that such learnings constitute a most important part of reading readiness. If that program is carried out in the kindergarten, then the kindergarten pupils should be given the complete reading readiness program including readiness for later word analysis. If there is no kindergarten available and the reading readiness program is carried out at the beginning of the first grade year, the pupils

there should be made ready for later word analysis.

IV. What Shall Those Beginning Steps Be?

Since the whole program in independence in word pronunciation is too vast to be described in detail here, the remainder of this discussion will be limited to the specific items of teaching which constitute the main jobs of the readiness part of this program. They will be classified under three headings:

1. Auditory Training
2. Visual Training
3. Training in the Use of the Context

At the readiness period, *Auditory Training* will teach the pupils to recognize that the words which they hear spoken have sound elements in them which can be recognized, and that these sound elements also have likenesses and differences. In the readiness program, *Visual Training* will teach the pupils to recognize visual likenesses and differences in letters and words, and that the characters known as letters have names. Believe it or not, it is the opinion of the writer that the names of the letters may well be learned in the visual training part of the readiness program. *Training in the Use of the Context* teaches the pupils to listen carefully to a whole oral sentence or passage and to use the context given orally to complete or fill in a missing word or idea.

Throughout the carrying out of *Auditory Training* and *The Use of the Context*, no printed or written words will be used or even seen by the pupils. Such training will be carried on through the use of the mechanism of the ears. However, in the carrying out of the *Visual Training* printed words will be used, but none need or will be named or recognized. Bear in mind, then, that these three types of teaching will involve no reading at the readiness period. Eyes, ears, and mental abilities will be trained so that pupils will be ready to carry out the later and more detailed steps in word analysis after reading has been begun in the fifth grade.

In most schools, such training is omitted entirely and pupils are subjected to the later, more difficult learning without the necessary preparation. When such teachings are omitted, many pupils have great trouble with the later learnings. When they are omitted, the pupil faces a situation quite like that in which the first rungs are left out of a ladder and, regardless of short legs, he is required to stretch to a third or fourth rung to begin the upward climb. In the learning program, as on the ladder, only the most fit can make the stretch over the parts left out. Many will fall and never make the stretch at all. In the later reading program, those who cannot bridge the gap independently are those who, as the teacher usually says, "never can get the idea of sounds in words," and "never can see the difference between these two 'confusion words,' 'went' and 'want'."

Three pieces of research are available which point out the value of early auditory and visual training. They are:

1. Junkins, Kathryn N., "The Construction and Evaluation of Exercises for Developing Visual Discrimination in Beginning Reading," Master's Thesis, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, 1940.
2. Murphy, Helen A., "The Construction and Evaluation of Exercises for Developing Auditory Discrimination in Beginning Reading," Master's Thesis, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, 1940.
3. . . . . . ., "An Evaluation of the Effect of Specific Training in Auditory and Visual Discrimination on Beginning Reading." Doctor's Thesis, Boston University, 1943.

The investigators found that the carrying out of either type of training improved the reading abilities of first grade pupils to such a degree that either was of great value. But when first graders received both auditory and visual training, the gains in reading achievement increased in proportion. There can be doubt, as a result of these researches, that auditory and visual training are of value and it is the opinion of the writer that these types of training can be given at the readiness period and continued through the first grade with added value.

The writer is certain that the learning of reading by the sight method is futile for all first graders who cannot achieve the learnings of the visual program in the readiness period. If a child lacks the perceptual abilities required in the exercises of this program, the learning of sight words is next to impossible for him. The exercises planned for this program are, for this reason, a screening device for determining who is ready for reading as well as being an aid for furthering readiness.

Likewise, learning to analyze words phonetically at a later period is next to impossible if, in the readiness period, pupils cannot hear and differentiate between sounds heard at the beginning and ends of words. It follows that exercises in the auditory program are a screening device for determining when pupils are ready to begin the study of phonics as well as being an aid to furthering readiness for that type of training.

In the auditory program, the following detailed learnings are of importance:

1. The ability to hear and differentiate between the sounds with which spoken words begin, using
   a. the commonest single consonant sounds including: b, hard c, d, f, hard g, h, j, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, w
   b. the commonest speech consonant sounds which are: wh, ch, sh, th (voiced and unvoiced)
   c. the commonest and easiest to make among the consonant blends, which are: sk, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, tw
2. The ability to hear rhyming endings and to differentiate between non-rhyming endings in words

In the visual program, the following detailed learnings are of importance:

1. The ability to name and note likenesses and differences in single letters which are
   a. Grossly different
   b. Somewhat similar
   c. Highly confusing
2. The ability to examine a word visually
   a. Beginning at the correct end
   b. Examining the letters all the way through the word
3. The ability to note likenesses and differences in words
   a. In grossly differing words
   b. In almost identical words
   c. In commonly reversed words
   d. In the common orderly factors in the construction of words

In the program in the use of the context, the following detailed learnings are of importance:

1. The ability to listen carefully to the end of a short or long passage given orally
2. The ability to use the context in the passage to supply a missing word or idea

V. HOW SHALL THE DETAILED LEARNINGS BE ACHIEVED?

Sample exercises follow, illustrating ways of aiding pupils in the achieving of the learnings outlined as being of importance.

1. Auditory Discrimination Exercises

In teaching pupils to discriminate between initial single consonants, only the more commonly recurring consonants listed above need be dealt with. The less commonly used consonants, such as *q* (u), *v*, *x*, *y*, and *z*, need not be used at all in the readiness program for auditory discrimination since they occur only infrequently in early reading matter.

After having determined the consonants which should be taught in the auditory discrimination exercises, one should then determine the order in which they should be taught. Facts which aid in deciding upon the order of teaching are:

a. Those consonants which children use most readily in learning to talk, are also those which they hear and recognize most easily in the readiness program. The labials, of which *m* and *b* are examples, are sounds which occur early in children's talking.

b. Those consonants which children substitute habitually in baby talk for those which they cannot make, are among the easier consonants which children hear and make. *W* is often substituted for *r* and *l*.

c. It is often difficult for children to differentiate between some of the consonants in the voiced and unvoiced pairs. It is difficult for children to hear difference between the sounds of the hard *g* and hard *c* (*k*).

Keeping the above facts in mind, the writer would use earliest the following six consonant sounds: *m*, *f*, *s*, *t*, hard *c*, and *b* After those are taught and the pupils have an understanding of how to hear and deal with initial consonants in the auditory exercises, the remainder of the commoner consonant sounds may be used.

EXERCISE 1

The teacher will find pictures of objects whose names begin with the sound of *m*, as exemplified by:

(Pictures)

match	monkey	milk	mitten
moon	money	mop	mouse

The teaching steps will be:

(1) To establish in the minds of the pupils that the names of all the objects pictured "begin alike," or "begin with the same sound."

(2) To train the pupils to pick out a picture of an object, such as "duck," introduced into the group which "does not belong with the others because it does not begin as they do" or "because it does not begin with the same sound."

EXERCISE 2

The teacher will select pictures of objects whose names begin with the sound of *b*, as exemplified by:

(Pictures)

ball	balloon	basket	bed
bell	bone	book	boy

The teaching steps will be:

(1) As above

(2) As above

(3) To assist pupils in separating the group beginning with *m* from that beginning with *b* when the two groups have been shuffled together.

EXERCISE 3

The teacher will find a composite picture which may possibly be a play room where are seen, among other things;

ball	balloon	basket	bed
bell	book	boy	box

The teaching steps will be:

(1) To find, one after another, all the objects whose names "begin like *bone*."

(2) To find, one after another, all the objects whose names "do not begin like *bone*."

Identical exercises will then follow with the remaining commonly recurring consonant sounds, including the speech consonants and consonant blends listed above.

It should be reemphasized that in all auditory exercises, such as the above, no words are seen in print. They are only heard.

Exercises 1, 2, and 3 show how to deal with initial consonant sounds in establishing auditory discrimination. Following are exercises dealing with rhyming endings in words for auditory discrimination.

EXERCISE 4

Using the poem, "The Goblin"[1] by Rose Fyleman, the teacher can establish easily what she means when she says "words rhyme." That poem is better than any known to the writer for teaching the concept of "rhyme" because the rhyming words are so very evident. From that introductory step, she can help the pupils to pick out rhyming words in poems having rhyming couplets as verses, as in "Grace and Anne"[2] by Lysbeth Boyd Borie. After that, rhyming words that occur at ends of alternate lines are not so difficult to hear.

EXERCISE 5

Another game which pupils enjoy will give them practice in thinking of a rhyming word which must also fit the context. The teacher will use the first four lines given below and will add two or more lines similar to the fifth and sixth given here which she herself can create. The last line must be finished by the pupils.

Teacher: A riddle for Tommy
A riddle for Ann
Guess this one now
If you can:

What do you have that says, "Rum-tum-tum."
It isn't a horn. It's a big red (*drum*).

EXERCISE 6

The teacher may create rhymes, the second rhyming word of each pair being supplied by the pupils. For example:

Teacher: I've lost my little kitty white
With her ribbon red.
I know she'll cry when it is (*night*)
And she can't find her (*bed*).

EXERCISE 7

The best exercise for pertinent practice in hearing and differentiating between rhyming endings in words is that where the teacher says, "I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with *cap*," or "Tell me a word which rhymes with *cat*." It is one of the best exercises for auditory discrimination because

(1) There is no aid for the pupil in thinking of a rhyming word except the key word given the teacher.

(2) The rhyming endings practiced may be those which are used most frequently in primary reading material and consequently the pupils can be trained to hear those rhyming endings which they'll use most frequently in later word analysis in the primary grades.

Commonly recurring rhyming endings[1] as found in the words contained in the Gates,[2]

[1]From *Sugar and Spice*, Chicago, Illinois: Whitman Publishing Company, 1935.

[2]From *Poems for Peter*, Philadelphia, Pennnsylvania: J. B. Lippincot Company, 1928.

[1]Harrison, M. Lucile; Lehr, Elizabeth, and others, "A Study of Phonetic Endings," Unpublished Study. Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, 1945.

[2]Gates, A. J., *A Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades.* Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1935.

the Stone,[3] and the Durrell[4] primary reading lists are:

(1) Short vowel endings: ap, at, an, and, ack, ad, en, et, ed, est, ead, ing, ick, ill, in, ip, it, op, ot.

(2) Long vowel endings: ake, eat, eep, ear, ight.

(3) Endings having a vowel sound only: ay (hay), ow (grow), ew (grew), aw (saw), ow (how).

2. Visual Discrimination Exercises

In the visual discrimination exercises it will be remembered that letters and words are seen. The names of the letters are to be learned, but words are not to be read to or by the pupils, since, at this point, the purpose is only to train their eyes. It is advised that the names of the letters, both lower case and capital, be learned. A child who knows the names of the letters will make closer visual discrimination between letters, which are the smallest visual units in reading.

Many attractive alphabet books now on the market are helpful in teaching the pupils the names of the letters. Alphabet blocks and wooden letters are also helpful equipment to have on hand for the purpose. The use of a primer-type typewriter helps pupils to learn the names of the letters. When a child asks the adult to spell for him a word which he wishes to write, the child is required to hunt the named letters, the adult helping him with unfamiliar ones.

Following are exercises for visual discrimination:

EXERCISE 1

In this exercise the letters in each box, other than the pair of like letters, are grossly different and differentiation is simple. The teacher will print the boxes of letters on squares of cardboard and present the cards singly before the pupils, or she may have rows of boxes on a large piece of oak-tag. In either case pupils will take turns in finding the two letters which are alike in a designated box. Following are examples of groups of grossly different letters:

a	x	h	o	d	d
a	w	s	h	z	y

EXERCISE 2

Here are examples of letters which are somewhat similar in form within each box:

a	e	y	g	k	h
o	e	g	j	j	k

EXERCISE 3

Here are examples of letters highly confusing in form within each box. Among these combinations are the letters commonly reversed in later reading. If clear differentiation takes place in the readiness period with these letters, the later confusions need not arise.

d	d	u	u	h	n
p	b	n	m	h	v

EXERCISE 4

In the boxes below are words which are grossly different in form. It will be easy for the pupils in turn to "find one word that is different from all the others" in each box.

to	toward	to	to	to	to
man	man	man	man	morning	man
male	male	male	male	making	

[3]Stone, C. R., *Better Primary Reading*. Webster Publishing Company, St. Louis, 1936, pp. 61-130.

[4]Durrell, D. D., *Improvement of Basic Reading Abilities*. World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, 1940, pp. 345-350.

While working with these easily distinguishable differences in words, the teacher should instruct the pupils to begin at the left (beginning of a word) and to examine it letter by letter all the way through. Some pupils must be taught what is meant by the term, "beginning of a word," and should find that it is not safe to examine only the beginning letters of words to determine likenesses and differences of whole words.

EXERCISE 5

In the boxes below are words which are alike except for a small detail of one or two letters. They are typical of the words commonly confused by immature and remedial cases in reading. A great deal of work should be done in helping pupils to see detailed differences in words such as these.

If, in the readiness period, visual discrimination cannot be achieved to such a degree that differences such as these can be detected, then the pupil should not be allowed to begin reading, for he cannot learn an initial vocabulary by the sight method unless he can readily see such detailed differences as appear here.

In working out exercises of this type the teacher should use the commonly confused words which cause difficulties in early reading as found by research. A list of such "confusion words"[1] is available so that no teacher need rely upon her own judgment as to what words she should use. It is recommended that every confusion pair found by Bennett in her research upon the problem should be included in such exercises, and many repetitions of their use should be carried out in the visual discrimination program in the readiness period. If this is done carefully and painstakingly, many of the later common confusions can be avoided. Below are examples in which the pupil will be asked to "find one word which is different from all of the others."

and	and	said	and	and

run	ran	run	run	run

went	went	went	want

EXERCISE 6

There are three types of reversals in words which occur repeatedly in later reading. They are:

(1) Reversed order of letters with confusion as to which is the beginning of a word as illustrated in the confusion of *on* and *no*, and *saw* and *was*.

(2) Reversed order of a portion of the word as illustrated in the confusion of *stop* and *spot*.

(3) The reversal of letters in words as illustrated by the confusion of *b* and *d* in *big* and *dig*.

There is great need for making clear and habitual the proper directional attack upon a word so as to avoid and overcome the common reversals of the primary grades. The commonly reversed words should be included in the practice materials. Many exercises such as the following should be used.

on	on	on	no	on	on	on

saw	was	was	was	was	was

stop	spot	stop	stop	stop

dig	dig	dig	dig	dig	big

The teacher may give one of two directions: (1) "Find one word which is different from all the others," or (2) as she shows a word card duplicating the odd word, "Find a word just like the one on this card."

[1]Bennett, Annette, "An Analysis of Errors Made in Word Recognition by Retarded Readers." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXXIII (January, 1942), pp. 25-38.

EXERCISE 7

When later structural analysis of words is taught, the pupil will be expected to note familiar words in compounds, and the orderly construction of words by finding familiar prefixes and suffixes at beginnings and ends of words. The teacher can prepare him for that by teaching him to look for designated parts of words. The following exercises are examples in which the pupil hunts the isolated part of the word in each word within the group. He will have to underline or box that part to show that he found it.

any	*any*body anyone something anything candy

be	*be*came dear because belong began elbow

him*self* business herself myself trifles	self

snug running jumping being song keeping	ing

(3) Training in the Use of the Context

In the training in the use of the context, two abilities are to be established. (1) Listening to the end of a short or long passage given orally, (2) using the context of the passage to supply a missing word or idea.

EXERCISE 1

The teacher will give oral directions which require listening to the last word in order to carry out the direction correctly, as:

(1) "Put the toy on the shelf between the two turtles and the toad." The pupil must not stop listening when he has heard the sentence through the word *shelf*, nor through the word *turtles*, in order to carry out the direction correctly.

(2) With the following pictures before the children: (a) a girl, (b) a girl with an empty basket, (c) a girl with a basket of apples, (d) a girl with an empty basket in a small wagon, and (e) a girl with a basket of apples in a small wagon, the teacher will say, "Bring me the picture of the girl who is carrying a basket of apples in her wagon."

EXERCISE 2

The teacher will give a passage orally asking the pupils to complete it, as

"Jack was carrying the groceries home for mother because there were so many of them. Besides he wanted to pull them in his new red ....

"The wagon was very pretty. The tongue was yellow, the box was ...., and there were four green .... with rubber ...."

VI. Caution to be Observed

There are several cautions which need to be stated and observed rigorously in order to avoid difficulties of one kind or another.

1. When working on visual training in the pre-reading period, none of the words used should be read. After reading has begun, the words used in visual training may or may not be read as is suitable for the pupils and their level of ability.

2. The words used in the visual training should be those which cause the greatest difficulties as far as accurate word recognition is concerned later in the reading program. For example, if you teach in the

preparatory period how to tell the difference visually between the words "went" and "want," the child should not experience the usual difficulties with those words. If he sees the difference, he will usually not make the common error.

3. When working upon the auditory training, the teacher should show no words. Only the ears are trained at that time.

4. The sound listened for at the beginnings of words should not be isolated and sounded apart from the words in which they occur. No child should say, "those words all begin with duh."

5. In the readiness period, the names of the letters should not be mentioned as the sounds are worked upon.

6. Auditory training, visual training, and the learning of the names of the letters should not be brought together until reading and the actual teaching of phonetic analysis has begun.

7. Many fine opportunities for training in the use of the context are lost by teachers who do not make it necessary for pupils to listen carefully to directions and explanations whenever they are given for some important activity which the child wishes to carry out. Teachers too frequently show pupils how to do things instead of making them understand through language expression.

VII. CONCLUSION

The program just discussed is comparable to the first rungs of the ladder in the complete program for independence in word pronunciation. It has usually been omitted entirely in the readiness program and in the first grade. Teachers have jumped over this program and have started with the phonics program for the analysis of new words. Let us, as kindergarten and primary teachers, try to carry out these teachings as carefully as we do the remainder of the program. They are important.

WORD MOVIES IN BLUEBIRD THEATRE

(Continued from Page 121)

tacles through which Peter Bell sees in this posy the sun. Personification in 'Jack-in-the-pulpit,' the synecdoche in 'Red Breast' immortalize the names. The names of flowers are more beautiful than the flowers themselves because they hold pictures.

The damning thing in education is a Gradgrind's belief that a wheelbarrow is of more value than the "Grecian Urn." We are not educating pupils to become hod carriers, for we might lose a poet or an inventor. What sold that velvety cloth but its fanciful name, kitten's ear? Imagination is invaluable in the learning of a language. Imagination created English, that picture language whose words are poems.

The National Council of Teachers of English

THE MINNEAPOLIS MEETING

"The Emerging English Curriculum" stepped out into blizzardy Minnesota weather, and, unafraid of its shadow, courageously took a frank, realistic look aound the educational world, and set its sights toward life. The curriculum of the future, it would appear, will be a much more closely articulated program of elementary, secondary, and college English instruction, with emphasis on matter and methods to meet the needs of the individual, to make the individual an effective citizen in a democracy, to relate English teaching to life and particularly to student experience, and to mobilize the resources of English communication for intergroup and intercultural education.

Almost two thousand teachers, 1858 to be exact, attended the thirty-fifth convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, at which the potentialities of this curriculum were examined. Delegates from twenty-eight states and Canada took part in the meeting held November 22-24 at Minneapolis, although because of traveling conditions and shortage of hotel space, about two-thirds came from outside Minnesota.

The topic of the first general session, held Thanksgiving night, was "The Basic Aims of English Instruction." The keynote to this and all subsequent discussions was struck by Professor Harold Anderson, University of Chicago, President of the Council, in his opening address, "The Function of English Instruction in Education for Democracy."

The second general session was held Friday morning, when "The English Curriculum in Perspective" was viewed by Miss Dora Smith, University of Minnesota, Irvin C. Pooley, University of Wisconsin, and Roy P. Basler, University of Arkansas.

Miss Smith clearly voiced what seemed to be the general feeling of the convention—composed of teachers at all grade levels—she said, "The *emerging* curriculum cannot be limited to either-or choices in the conflicts of the educational world today. It must seek from the best of all avenues of thought those elements which most effectively promote the clearly defined goals on which it premises its total program."

At the secondary level, Professor Pooley would strenuously "evict the theory that formal grammar is essential" and throw out all textbooks, workbooks, and drillbooks "which attempt to teach usage grammar, and composition by dissection and mutilation of printed sentences." "Composition must become communication, must become the free and natural expression of independent ideas." Moreover, he would avoid as fallacies the two premises that great literature is good for pupils regardless of whether or not they understand it, and that each selection of literature will influence, will move to instruct each pupil in any class to the same degree. He advocates the introduction of group study as stimulative to student thinking and much more individual counselling to meet individual needs.

The Annual Dinner of the National Council was held Friday night with Charles

J. Turck, President, Macalester College, St. Paul, as toastmaster. The A Cappella Choir of the West High School, Minneapolis, sang; Robert Penn Warren, poet, novelist, and professor of English in the University of Minnesota, read selections from his poems; and Ruth Suckow, novelist, spoke on "Words and People." Words by themselves don't mean anything, Miss Suckow said. It is their users which give them meaning. Articles and books have signatures to show who is willing to be called to account. Articles which are "ghosted" lack real integrity and therefore lack real meaning. Suppose, she conjectured, the Second Inaugural had been found to be ghosted. What would have been the effect on the course of American history? In these days of much flinging about of words, there is imperative need for words to be given integrity by their users' willingness to be called to account for them.

A special event of the banquet was the presentation of the first annual NCTE radio award to Norman Corwin for his radio program entitled "On a Note of Triumph." Max J. Herzberg, Chairman of the Council Committee on Radio and Photoplays, presented to the President of the Council his committee's formal recommendation of the award. The citation was then made by Harold A. Anderson, President of the Council, who after reviewing Corwin's accomplishments, acclaimed him for "having made the most notable contribution of the year to the development of new forms of artistic expression in the field of the radio." Mr. Corwin was unable to be present but the dinner audience heard his speech of acceptance by way of a transcribed recording.

The annual luncheon seemed more than usually festive. The beautifully costumed Madrigal Club, Harding High School, St. Paul gave a delightful program of eighteenth century music. Theodore C. Blegen, Dean of the Graduate School, University of Minnesota, in his singing, reciting, and explaining of the hope and despair of "Immigrant and Pioneer in Ballad and Song" gave an admirable example of what the fine fruits of a liberal education *can* be! An extremely competent exposition of how the reading of books can assist in promoting international understanding was given by Virginia Kirkus, critic, author, and lecturer. "Books are atom bombs of the future," she said, and stressed the need for always reading on both sides of an issue. For example, to help clarify our thinking about English, she suggests such dissimilar books as Frank Dobey's *A Texan in England*, and Denis Brogan's *The English People;* to better appreciate the problems of present day France, *The Gravediggers of France* by Pertinax, and *So Thick the Fog* by Catherine Stuart; to help appraise the implications of the current disturbances in China, Gunther Stein's *Challenge of Red China*, Lin Yutang's *Vigil of a Nation*, and Owen Lattimore's *Solution in Asia.*

BUSINESS

The most important business of the Council is usually the last act of the Board of Directors—the election of new officers. The leaders chosen for 1946 are Helene W. Hartley, Syracuse University, *President*; Ward Green, Director of English, Tulsa, *First Vice-President;* H. A. Domincovitch, Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia, *Second Vice-President;* and W. Wilbur Hatfield, Chicago Teachers College, *Secretary-Treasurer*. These officers, with the presidents of the last three years—Max J. Herzberg, Angela M. Broening, and Harold A. Anderson—and chairmen of the three Sections of the Council—Roy P. Basler, Irvin C. Pooley, and Dora V. Smith—compose the Executive Committee, which will manage Council affairs until next Thanks-

giving. A Nominating Committee to propose next spring a slate of officers to be elected next Thanksgiving was chosen by informal ballot of the Board: E. A. Cross, *chairman*, Marquis E. Shattuck, Marion C. Sheridan, John J. DeBoer, and Helen J. Hanlon.

The Board of Directors adopted a strong resolution of thanks to the local people who on very short notice had planned and carried out arrangements with unusual smoothness. The Board also approved recommendation by the Committee on Resolutions that such a committee be appointed well in advance of each convention, so that it may have time to prepare resolutions on educational issues if this seems desirable.

The Board passed upon the reports of 26 Committees, only two of which aroused debate (as distinguished from discussion). One of these was the proposal by the Committee on Intercultural Relations of a resolution requesting the Executive Committee to try to place Council conventions in cities where Council members of all races and colors will be accepted as hotel guests. The other was the report of the Committee on Magazine Study, which, after rehearsing the directions given it, rendered this opinion:

1. We question whether the original investigation should have been requested by the Executive Committee in the first place. We recommend that no further analysis of the *Reader's Digest* or any other single periodical be undertaken unless the National Council desires an objective study of a number of the magazines most commonly used in the schools. Even such study should not be undertaken until the pamphlet suggested in paragraph 3 has been formulated and accepted by the National Council.

2. The report of Mrs. Miller's Committee deserves commendation for its thought-provoking qualities; however, it falls short of the objective viewpoint necessary for sponsorship and publication by the National Council, and it is inadequate as a reply to the request of the Executive Committee. Further, Dr. Broening's handling of the report lacked complete objectivity. We recommend that neither the Committee's report nor Dr. Broening's subsequent analysis be used as an official National Council report and that the Executive Committee's stand in not accepting the Committee report or publication be sustained.

3. There is as yet no official National Council statement concerning periodical literature in the English classroom. The increasing popularity of magazines and newspapers makes desirable a report on the choice and use of periodicals. We recommend that the National Council sponsor the preparation and publication of a pamphlet on the evaluation and use of magazines and newspapers in the classroom.

A motion to strike out the first two items in this report was lost decisively on a show of hands. Both reports were ultimately approved without dissenting votes.

The Treasurer's report, as of August 1, 1945, showed Council resources somewhat increased. Membership had increased again, even more than it had the year before.

The College section elected as members of the Section Nominating Committee for 1946, Ida M. Jewett and Sister Brigetta and the Council Executive Committee, in accordance with the Constitution, appointed Elizabeth Manwaring, of Wellesley as the third member.

The Annual Meeting (individual members of the Council) adopted all the eight proposed amendments to the Constitution printed in the October issue of *College English*. These are all technical matters which do not affect Council policies.

ELECTION NOTICE

The Elementary Section of the National Council will in May elect by mail ballot three members of the Elementary Section Committee to work with the following four holdovers:

Marion Edman, Supervisor, Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan

Annie McCowen, Elementary Education, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, Colorado

J. Conrad Seegers, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Cora Mae Simmons, 1119 Polk Street, Amarillo, Texas

The Elementary Section Nominating Committee, consisting of Guy L. Bond, University of Minnesota; Constance McCullough, Western Reserve University; and Mary D. Reed, State Teachers College, Terre Haute, proposes the following six candidates for three places:

Bernice E. Leary, Curriculum Consultant, Madison, Wisconsin

Ruth Strickland, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

Martha Seeling, Elementary School Supervisor, San Diego, California

Jeanie Campbell, State Department of Education, Salt Lake City, Utah

Genevieve Bowen, Curriculum Director, Bucks County, Doylestown, Pennsylvania

William E. Young, State Department of Education, Albany, New York

Additional candidates may be named by a petition signed by fifteen members of the Elementary Section and, accompanied by the permission of the candidates, presented to the Secretary of the Council, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago, March 15th.

The Section will also elect at the same time in the same way two members of the Board of Directors of the National Council. For the two places the Nominating Committee propose the following four persons:

Helen Mackintosh, United States Office of Education, Washington D. C.

Constance McCullough, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio

Margarette Teers, Demonstration School, University of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Mrs. Bernice Skeen, Elementary School Principal, Salem, Oregon

Additional nominations may be made by a petition signed by fifteen members of the Section, and accompanied by the written permission of the nominees, presented to the Secretary of the Council by March 15th.

W. Wilbur Hatfield
Secretary-Treasurer

NCTE PRESENTS RADIO AWARD TO NORMAN CORWIN[1]

MAX J. HERZBERG *Recommends*

Mr. President and Members and Guests of the Council:

You will recall, Mr. Anderson, that last March the Executive Committee inaugurated a project for awarding a series of citations in various fields of the language arts, and the Executive Committee decided to begin experimentally with awards in two fields—radio and the photoplay. The arrangements for these two citations were intrusted to the Committee on Radio and Photoplay of which I am the chairman. The thirty-one members of this committee were asked to make nom-

[1]At the Annual Dinner, in Minneapolis, November 23, 1945.

inations for the awards, and a similar request went to the entire membership of the Council.

I wish to report to you at this time that no photoplay of the past year was considered worthy of an award within the limits of our citation. In the field of the radio a number of nominations were made. The variety and character of these radio productions confirmed our belief that a close connection does exist between literary excellence in books and in such newer forms of communication as the radio. These nominations were submitted to members of the Committee, and I am happy to announce that the largest number of votes went to Norman Corwin for his radio program entitled "On a Note of Triumph," which was first broadcast over the Columbia Broadcasting System on May 8 and repeated many times thereafter. I request, Mr. Anderson, that as president of the National Council of Teachers of English you make the official citation honoring Mr. Corwin.

President Anderson Makes the Citation

Mr. Herzberg, Members and Guests of the National Council of Teachers of English:

As teachers of English we are vitally concerned with all forms of communication in which words are the primary medium. In our day new forms of language communication with novel techniques have been created. For nearly two decades the National Council of Teachers of English has taken cognizance of the two forms of communication to which Mr. Herzberg has referred. When the photoplay and the radio were in their infancy, the Council created active committees in these areas and produced materials helpful to teachers of English. We have been interested both in the employment of these new mediums as instruments of instruction in our classrooms and in the development of discriminating tastes among young people in their out-of-school choice of radio programs and motion pictures. Further, the evidence of our concern with radio and the photoplay is found in the inauguration this year of the annual awards to which reference has just been made.

Our professional organization is pleased to make Norman Corwin the recipient of our first Annual Award in Radio. Mr. Corwin has been a potent voice on the air since 1929, when he was only nineteen years old; he has been receiving awards for distinguished performances in writing and producing radio scripts since 1938; and he has recently established himself as a creative artist in motion picture and radio production—all possibly by way of preparation for television, child of the two arts.

Much of Corwin is, fortunately, already in print and on recordings, and with the help of those we can begin to estimate his place as a creative artist. He has applied his seemingly inexhaustible ingenuity not merely to the contrivance of impressive effects on the air but also to the ancient literary problems of plotting and characterization. We recall a host of memorable personages created by Corwin—from that remarkable caterpillar named Curley to Mr. Gumpertz with his numerous avatars.

Mention should also be made of two other outstanding qualities of Corwin's—his humor and his humanity. A notable instance of the former was the program called "It Seems Radio Is Here To Stay." Corwin's humanity is most strikingly exemplified in the script for which we are especially honoring him this evening: "On a Note of Triumph." In that powerful dramatic production we find Corwin's hatred of tyranny and injustice, his pity for the endless sufferings of mankind under the relentless scourge of dictators, his

exultation that democracy and particularly that America has triumphed.

To Norman Corwin, for his having made the most notable contribution of the year to the development of new forms of artistic expression in the field of the radio, the National Council of Teachers of English presents its first Radio Award. It is a privilege to make this official citation.

I regret that prior engagements make it impossible for Mr. Corwin to be present personally to accept the award. A copy of this citation was, however, sent to him, and we are to have the pleasure of listening now to his acceptance.

Norman Corwin Accepts the Citation

Mr. Anderson and Members of the National Council:

No one could possibly regret more than I that I must thank you for this great honor by way of my voice alone. There is perhaps some faint consolation for us both in the fact that there at last is a transcription which will not attempt to sell you Pepsi-Cola.

I miss being with you on many counts: for the pleasure of shaking one of Dr. Anderson's hands and accepting from the other your generous citation; for the experience of seeing and meeting you and, I cheerfully confess, for the chance of hearing any stray applause which might have greeted this ceremony, because applause is one of my favorite sound effects. I hear it so seldom. Broadcasting as I do, without a studio audience, it takes me from three days to three weeks to find out whether anybody has heard a program and, if so, whether he liked it. Sometimes broadcasting can be a lonely business, especially when you happen to be on the air opposite Bob Hope. There have been moments when I felt my audience consisted of two people—my mother and father—and I've even suspected *they* were taking turns listening to me. So you can see how, apart from everything else, your action of tonight gives me great comfort and assurance. But I prefer not to consider it apart from anything else. I prefer to think that, in deciding "On a Note of Triumph," you were casting a vote for what I shall call "painstaking radio."

Whatever the artistic merit of this script, and there are critics who think it nil—none among them a teacher in English, I am happy to add—whether it has literary or documentary value, this show was not produced overnight. It took weeks of research, of plotting, of writing. Its musical score was composed well in advance. By ordinary radio standards, this much preparation is roughly equivalent to a five-year-plan. I see no reason why radio should wait for occasions as transcendentally great as Victory in a World War to commission painstaking programs. At the established rate, this would mean one literary-type broadcast every twenty-five years.

It is to be hoped that the radio industry as a whole, and not merely a single progressive network, will give higher incentive to the writer. By this I don't mean, primarily, economic incentive, although the reward of a good fat fee has never been known to discourage a writing man. I mean, mainly, freedom of expression, tools with which to work, and a decent time on the air. There's little point in writing an ambitious play if it is going to be broadcast at an hour when most people are asleep. As things now stand, the incentives within radio for the taking of literary pains are not too great. The greatest incentives come from without; that is, from the support of a listening public which is becoming more and more discerning; from the encouragement to both artist and industry which derives from awards such as that by which you honor radio tonight.

I think we all would like to see more boldness and enterprise in the artistic reaches of radio. In the theater, at least, a backer will take a chance. He'll support a daring or unconventional play because it is different. A film studio will gamble millions on a picture. But there is too little courage in radio as it is practiced by the advertising agencies. They want to play it very, very safe.

Too many have become fast slaves to the ratings and have been completely hostile to originality and to experimentation. Nobody would deny the virtue and desirability of healthy balance sheets, and I am not suggesting that radio grow long hair and become arty. But there is nothing in the way of reserving a certain quota of time for works of genuine literary quality which incidentally might increase the prestige of radio. Radio has far to go before its poets catch up with its engineers, and the distance can't be shortened by denying opportunity and air time to talented but unproduced writers.

As to what's being said in the time available to existing programs, I wonder whether we're doing all we can to guide our country and ourselves through the perilous beginnings of the atomic age. I, personally, would like to see as much resourcefulness, energy, brain power, and talent going into the sale of Democracy by educational and advertising methods as goes into a sales campaign for Wheaties. Democracy gives you strength too.

I don't wish to give the impression that I think American radio is poor. It happens to be the best in the world right now. I am just saying that it could be better with very little trouble. It could be better if everyone in it would more often consider broadcasting a privilege as well as a business, an art as well as an industry.

You of the National Council are helping radio to realize its responsibilities as a social force and its potential as a national art by the very institution of an annual award.

I am proud and I'm happy to be the first selected by your committee for this citation, and I hope that in years to follow there will be many a finer practitioner of the broadcast world to represent this medium and to make the choice of your judges progressively easier.

The Educational Scene

The United China Relief, Incorporated, has just published a pageant entitled *Flame of China* as a part of its program to bring about a better understanding of China. The primary purpose of the pageant is to acquaint young people with the scope of China's history from the earliest beginning to the present struggle for democracy. Although designed for dramatic production, the booklet is also suitable for reading by young people and adults. Copies may be secured at cost (25 cents) from United China Relief, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

Other recent pamphlets: a leaflet entitled *Reading for Democracy, 1946, IV*, an annotated list of 39 important books for teachers on the subject of democratic relations among people of varying faiths, nationalities, and races. A leaflet published by the American Russian Institute for Cultural Relations with the Soviet Union, describing recent developments in Soviet education. Title, *Soviet Schools in War and Peace*. Free. A new pamphlet in the Public Affairs series entitled *We Can Have Better Schools* by Maxwell S. Stewart contains suggestions for improved practices relating to citizenship education.

An excellent annotated list of favorite books for children in the early grades has been compiled by Mrs. Lyla Greathouse Gillis of State Teachers College, Oswego, New York. It is entitled "Ten-Ten Double Ten, Forty-five and Fifteen," and sells for six cents a copy.

The Association for Arts in Childhood, Inc., 58 Park Avenue, New York 16, N. Y., with the participation of the Industrial Arts Cooperative Service, 519 West 123rd Street, New York 27, N. Y., has published its first bulletin of 1946 under the title *Arts in Childhood*. It contains interesting articles by Dean Ernest Melby of New York University, Grace Allen of the Ann Reno Institute, New York City, and Peter Blos of Brooklyn College, on phases of the growth of children in creative expression.

A selected list of references for teachers on the subject of China, compiled and annotated by Dr. C. O. Arndt of the U. S. Office of Education, appears in the February, 1946 issue of *School Life*, the official journal of the U. S. Office of Education.

Plans for the observance of Pan American Day, April 14, have been announced by the Pan American Union. Literature prepared for distribution by the PAU includes two booklets dealing, respectively, with the political and economic aspects of the Inter-American system in the postwar. On the scholastic level, there is a student-teacher manual containing diversified material designed to aid school groups planning local observance of Pan American Day. A three-color poster, featuring the 1946 slogan, is also available.

All material is published, separately, in English, in Spanish, and in Portuguese. Requests for the booklets and the poster should be addressed to the Office of the Counselor, Pan American Union, Washington 6, D. C., specifying the language or languages and number of copies desired, chosen from the titles listed below:

"The Inter-American System: Past Achievements—Future Aspirations," "Postwar Economic Welfare in the America," Know Your Neighbor": A series of brief descriptive articles on the republics of Latin America, "Manual for Students and Teachers"—Contents:

1. One-act play: "A Near Tomorrow"
2. Quiz: "What Do You Know About Latin America?"
3. Selected Latin American poetry
4. Four singing games of Latin America

"Suggestions for Pan American Day Observance": A mimeographed handbook.

Poster: size 12″ x 18″.

Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue are by Ruth Cunningham, Phyllis Fenner, Ivah Green, Elizabeth Guilfoile, Irene I. Irwin, Agnes Krarup, Helen R. Sattley, Bernardine G. Schmidt, Dorothy E. Smith, and Jean Gardiner Smith. Unsigned annotations are by the editor.]

FOR TEACHERS

A Manual for Remedial Reading. By Edward W. Dolch. Champaign: The Garrard Press, 1945. Pp. 460 xv (Second edition)

Two additional chapters make this second edition significantly more valuable than the first: one on the personality problems of poor readers, and another on remedial work and parent co-operation. The book presents methods of teaching specific techniques and skills that the poor reader needs for his improvement, and in addition emphasizes the need for extensive leisure reading and the development and expansion of reading interests.

This presentation discusses the philosophies of learning upon which successful reading programs are built, the "five-step program" which a good remedial plan must include: (1) developing learning confidence, (2) building and speeding-up a sight vocabulary, (3) teaching self-help sounding, (4) developing comprehension and (5) developing and expanding interests; and the importance of case-history information in individual planning. Specific remedial procedures for grade levels from primary through high school grades are enumerated and their development described.

The *Manual* should prove a helpful text for the beginning teacher in the regular classroom, and as a text for the first classes in reading in teacher-training courses.

Bernardine G. Schmidt
The Special Educational Clinics,
Terre Haute (Ind.) State Teachers College.

FOR CHILDREN

Pictures from Mother Goose. Feodore Rojankovsky, artist. Simon and Shuster, Inc. and Artists and Writers Guild, Inc. Eight lithographed prints, each 14 by 19 inches.

Feodore Rojankovsky must have enjoyed painting this series of eight scenes from Mother Goose. His enjoyment shows in the pictures, and is reflected by the children who see them. Gay, colorful, and intriguing, they are a happy start for creating stories. In fact, one of the values of these pictures is that they are probably more useful for stimulating the imagination for interpreting Mother Goose.

It is likely that three to eight-year-olds will be most interested in these prints, each age group bringing its own experience, and taking a wide range of ideas and appreciations from the pictures. Some will prefer the directness of "Pussycat, Pussycat," while others will find lasting entertainment in the more detailed design of the old woman's scores of children scampering around the shoe.

. Color has been used skilfully. It is bright enough to attract children and carry gaiety and freshness, yet sufficiently rich and subtle to hold their interest. The lithographic reproduction is excellent.

Ruth Cunningham
William Vitarelli
Teachers College
Columbia University

Garibaldi. Nina (Brown) Baker. Illustrated by Louis Slobodkin. Vanguard, $2.50.

A fine biography of the Italian patriot by this author who is making such important contributions to the history and biography reading of young people. This is a thrilling one, following Garibaldi into exile, showing the part he played in South American history, giving vivid accounts of his liberation of Sicily and of Naples. The human side, the weaknesses of the man in spite of his great strength and power and character, is well brought out. Should be shared with the social-studies teachers. 6th grade, on up.

H. R. S.

Rags' Day. By Helen Hoke. Pictures by Diana Thorne. Veritas Press, $1.00.

Rags, the terrier, followed Betty and Jack to school every day, but when he left them at the school door, he set out for a day of his own. A picture book with a very slim binding.

H. R. S.

Little Lost Lamb. By Golden MacDonald. Illustrated by Leonard Weisgard. Doubleday, Doran, $2.00.

A new version of the story of the little black lamb which strays from the safety of the flock. Told from the point of view of the shepherd boy who can not sleep until he sets out to rescue him and bring him back. Lovely, full page pictures of the mountain country. Picture book age. H. R. S.

Our Negro Brother. By Edith H. Mayer. Illustrated by Elsie McKean. Shady Hill Press, $1.50.

Biographies of eight Negroes who have had a part in the making of our country, from Pedro Nino who sailed with Columbus to A. Philip Randolph who helped organize the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. A large, picture-book-type book with fine, full-page illustrations. An over-emphasis has been made to have the book appear simple, each sentence having been set on a line by itself, and this tends to make the reading jerky and uninspired. But the material is so good, the whole format so attractive, and the subject matter so needed, that it is an important school addition. 4th and 5th grade vocabulary, but it can be used from 3rd through 8th grades. H. R. S.

Caddie Woodlawn; a Play, By Carol Ryrie Brink. Macmillan, $1.25.

Although Caddie is welcome in any guise, there may be some difficulty in staging this dramatization of a favorite story. Of the nineteen characters, ten are adult; and the properties include such items as saddle bags, hazelnuts in their burrs, and clocks. The action is episodic rather than keyed to a climax and would probably not be of enough interest for an adult production. Schools and library groups not charging admission may produce the play without permission from the author. The real use of the book with children may be as an introduction to the dramatic form of literature, and for informal classroom or story hour dramatizations.

J. G. S.

Gid Granger. By Robert Davis. Illustrated by Charles Banks Wilson. Holiday House, $2.00.

Maybe it is because I like country folks and their little details of everyday living. Maybe it is because I love Vermont. Whatever it is, I love this book. It seems to me to have everything a good book takes, a hero warm and friendly, a setting honest and true, things happening, a variety of things, with a comfortable solution at the end.

Gid Granger is left, at seventeen, as the man of the family when his older brother goes off to war. How he manages the farm, starts projects of his own to get cash for the family, the day by day planning to get along, is fascinating. Tolerance, not only of foreigners who settle as his neighbors, but of city folks when the city boy comes to help, makes a deep note in the book. Everybody is left a bit better off at the end, even Eb, the brother, who upon returning home from war, does not want to come back to the farm. This is oh such a good story. P. F.

The Bible Picture Book. Illustrated by Florian. Garden City Publishing Co. 50c.

First Nursery Stories. Illustrated by Florence Kent. Garden City Publishing Co. 50c.

These two books are much alike in format. The heavy cardboard covers, which open flat, are durable, paper and print are good, the illustrations in each book are excellent, and in perfect keeping with the subject matter. *The Bible Picture Book* contains six stories from the Old Testament. Many of the original verses have been omitted, leaving those which definitely carry the story forward, thus making the material more interesting to the child. In places where it was impossible to do this and still convey the right meaning, the omitted material has been summarized and printed in italics. Recommended for oral reading for the child's first hearing of the Bible, regardless of age, depending upon the individual. In *First Nursery Stories* are eight old favorites such as "The Little Red Hen," "The Gingerbread Boy" etc. This is a good selection of eight series without which no child's story background is complete. At the extremely reasonable price of these books, each is a real find and is highly recommended for any child's early library shelf.

Rainbow's End. By Berta and Elmer Hader. Illustrated by the author. The Macmillan Company, $2.00.

To me this is the warmest and the best of all the Hader books. Toby, a ship's carpenter, is shipwrecked with his cat. They land in a beautiful little cove and Toby decides to stay. Always he has dreamed of a little house of his own. He has drawn plans, dreamed it, waking and sleeping. He decides to build here, but he is so busy helping his neighbors, both the animals and the people, that he just doesn't get his house built. However, what one wants hard enough one gets, and while he is away at sea for a time his neighbors surprise him with his house. It is a sweet story for 8-10 year olds. Or forty years olds who like good things. P. F.

The Wonderful Voyage. By Ruth Langland Holberg. Illustrated by Phyllis Coté. Doubleday, Doran, $2.00.

Eight-year-old Randy was glad she was to spend three years on her father's whaling ship, sailing from Gloucester in the 1850's, for she hated school and the boys and girls there who did not understand her. But she found out on that long trip that one can miss friends and she came back prepared to make some. She and her older brother learned all about whaling, too, on that trip and though Randy found it hard to "just be a girl," she was to show the crew and Jay that girls are important, too. 4th through 6th grades.
H. R. S.

Ships of the Fleet. By Elizabeth Mallett Conger. Holt, $2.00.

Interest in the work of the American Navy during World War II continues strong among young people. This attractive volume describes simply the operation and achievements of fighting ships such as battleships, submarines, destroyers, aircraft carriers, and landing craft. Separate chapters on the coast guard, the marines, and the seabees are included. Information for the volume was supplied by naval officials. Large, clear photographs appear on almost every page. For junior high school age.

The Black Stallion Returns. By Walter Farley. Illustrated by Harold Eldridge. Random House, $2.00.

A sequel to *Black Stallion* with all the fireworks which made the first adventure story so popular. Alec returns to Arabia in search of the Black whose owner has claimed him. Being lost on the desert, involved in a feud, and taking part in a race are among the adventures of Alec and Henry. Although in the Superman class, it serves the purpose of luring the reluctant reader to the printed page. Grades 5-10. J. G. S.

First Nursery Songs. Illustrated by Fini. Arranged by Leonore Rose Smith. Garden City Publishing Co. $1.00.

With a picture on one page and a familiar nursery song on the other this makes an attractive and, I am sure, a well liked book for home and school. There are 24 songs: Lazy Mary, Will You Get Up, Yankee Doodle, Where Is My Little Dog Gone, and others. The pictures tell the story. For little children, of course. P. F.

Search Through Pirate's Alley. Comfort, M. F. William Morrow & Co. 1945. $2.00.

This is a story of life in New Orleans, centering around Pierre and Collette, two children of the charming but decaying French Quarter. They helped their father run a pastry shop in New Orleans, although such work was contrary to all the customs of the French gentlemen of 1900. They also helped find a beautiful desk, once bought for Napoleon, which had disappeared under mysterious circumstances. The author has woven a background of legend and history with great skill out of real research. The Creole D'Orsays emerge as a typical resourceful American family, meeting their problems with pluck and ingenuity. E. G.

Clear the Track. By Louis Slobodkin. Illustrated by the author. Macmillan, $1.50.

With his father and sister a small boy shares the adventurous ride on his toy train. When mother, the practical realist of the family, returns from her shopping trip she fails to appreciate the mess in the living room. It is a delightfully child-like story that can be read by second-graders and is guaranteed not to bore parents who have to read it aloud to the younger fry. D. E. S.

The Wind Boy. By Ethel Cook Eliot. Illustrated by Robert Hallock; rev. ed. Viking, $2.00.

A new edition of a story first published in 1923. Although another war has again

brought the problem of refugee children, one could hope for a better solution than this escape to a dream world. The story is confused because the author instead of letting it stand as pure fairy tale is involved in trying to create sympathy for refugees. The style is dated, and four *oh's* in a single page all used to indicate surprise begin to pall on the reader. The story seems altogether too precious and lacks either the quality of writing to lift it to a secure place in fantasy or the facing of a real world which such a book as *The Hundred Dresses* offers. For grades 5-7. G. S.

Too Big Feet. Story and pictured by Richard Wilt. Veritas Press, $1.00.

A picture book of an Indian boy whose feet were so large that he frightened the animals and the fish, and tipped over the canoe. But when the drought came, Too Big Feet danced with such wonderful thumps that there was a downpour in no time at all. Although a trivial tale, it may strike a responsive note in the child whose feet seem always to be much too big. For reading aloud or grades, 3-4. J. G. S.

The Sleepy Quilt. By Charlotte Steiner. Doubleday, $1.00.

Because Timmy did not like to go to bed, his grandmother sent him a storybook quilt. With the friends on the quilt, Timmy floated on the river, climbed the ice-cream hill, flew over the tree tops on the big yellow goose, and rode on the merry-go-round horse. A gentle bedtime story for little people. The illustrations have the gaiety and humor which characterize Charlotte Steiner's work.

J. G. S.

Summer and Winter. By Inez Bertail. Pictures by Rosemary Davis. Veritas, $1.00.

Susan whose birthday comes in summer, and Ronnie whose birthday comes in winter try to decide which season is more fun. The joys of both summer and winter are shown in full page illustrations accompanied by a brief text. J. G. S.

Whoa, Ginger! By Hildred Tope. Illustrated by Doris Stolberg. Wm. Morrow & Co. 1945. Cloth $2.00.

Joe and Joy, the Warren twins, learned how to raise chickens, how to manage a peppery but faithful pony, how to chop wood and many other useful things in the months they spent on the farm at Airy Acres. They learned too how people depend upon each other in a country community and realized that a seventh grade boy and girl could help in such important matters as seeing the mail through to the farms in a time of emergency, and helping an old and lonely neighbor protect her property. E. G.

Super-Market Secret. By Emilie Vinall. Pictures by Ilse Bischoff. Thomas Y. Crowell, $1.00.

Ten year old Peter and Ann go alone to the market to buy supplies for a birthday party. This social studies reader in picture-book format lacks literary quality but fills a need for attractively presented material that can be read by second grade children. Pictures in grays and red are lively and instructive. A. K.

Gold of Glanaree. By Maura Laverty. Illustrated by Betty Morgan Bowen. Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., New York, $2.50.

Mike, Conn, and Essie, three children of Ireland, through a series of planned and unplanned adventures involving a field of strawberries, a calf, and a hammer, discover a hidden treasure. The tale has an Irish flavor and many distinctively Irish words. Illustrations have that indefinable something belonging peculiarly to stories about Ireland.

I. I. I.

Rollo is a Bunny. By Nettie and Robin King. Garden City Publishing Co., $.25.

Rollo lives again the age-old story of the little bunny who escapes from his rabbit hutch to the farmer's vegetable garden. But this little bunny meets a fuzzy caterpillar who tickles his nose; a baby chick who pulls his fur; and a baby robin who falls on him and hurts his head. The pictures are soft and colorful, and the single-line print on each page is well-suited to the pre-school and first year child. B. G. S.

Susie Is a Kitten. By Nettie King. Pictures by Leonard Weisgard. Garden City Publishing Co., $0.25.

Another foldaway story of Sandy and her pet kitten, Susie. The booklet tells the

tricks that Susie finds to amuse herself while Sandy is at school all day. The pictures are particularly enchanting, both in color and form, and should find many uses in stimulating language activities with pre-school and primary children. B. G. S.

The Singing Cart. Written and Illustrated by Joan Crocker. William Morrow and Company, $2.00.

A rather attractive book without too exciting a story. Two Sicilian children crave to own Do-Nothing, the little gray donkey. They trade their American wrist watches for it and their fun and trouble begin. There are a few nice bits of humor, but on the whole the story seems ordinary and in need of editing. The eight or nine year old child for whom this is intended will find it dull, I am afraid. P. F.

Away We Go. By Laura Harris. Illustrated by Jane Flory. Garden City Publishing Co., $1.00.

"Away we go, all kinds of ways, on land and air and water." From fire engines to elevators to doll carriages to going on foot, all told with a paucity of words and nice clear pictures. A good book for nursery school child, or for that matter, any child who likes to look at pictures. P. F.

Calling All Ducks. By Brigadier General Ralph DeVoe. Pictures by Nils Hogner. Crowell, $1.00.

This is a beautiful little book for very little children with its lovely pictures in greens and browns. I can't say as much for the story. Midgie, a little Mallard duck, is used as a call duck to decoy wild ducks. Midgie, being a smart little duck, soon realizes this, manages to get free from the weight holding her down, warns the ducks, gets back to the hunter whom she loves. The hunter forgives her and realizes that he has been unfair. Someway it is so far beyond the realms of reason that I don't like it.

P. F.

Pogo's Mining Trip: A Story of Gold. By Jo and Ernest Norling. Henry Holt & Company, $1.25.

While it always seems to me that factual books put in story form are unnecessary because children like their facts "straight," I am always glad to see another Pogo book. Lots of other folks will be glad too. In this book, John and Pogo go to the mountains and find out how gold is mined. It is told in story form for youngest readers. The end papers of the book are fascinating, showing all of the equipment for mining and a picture map of where they went. P. F.

Wee Wizards of the Woods. By Mabel V. Hoadley. Illustrated by Frederica Jackson. Bruce Humphries, $1.00.

The Brownies go about relieving distress by work and magic in a spirit that is either sentimental or downright revengeful. These episodes are related in verses that are uninspired, often labored. Not recommended.

A. K.

Secret on the Potomac. By Eleanor Weakley Nolen. David McKay Co., 1945 pp. 215 $2.00.

The early days of a struggling young nation and the war of 1812 held many strange activities for the boys and girls of those days as well as their fathers and mothers. Marcia Dene lives this period in Washington as the daughter of a Maryland senator, and learns to know her young "pro-British" friend, Todd, during the same years. The story is told with a zest for detail and an understanding of the emotions of adolescents. It is particularly well-suited to the upper intermediate and junior high reader. B. G. S.

Happy Jack. By Miriam E. Mason. Illustrated by Doris and George Hauman. Macmillan, $1.50.

Happy Jack, a little black mule, ran away from the dog and pony show because he did not like to work. But when he found himself at the Grindhard farm, where everyone worked constantly, and discoverd that he had to work harder than he ever had in his life, he tried some fancy kicking. One day he suddenly became a hero, after which he found that work could be fun and the Grindhard family discovered that some play was good too. A good book for children in the first and second grades who have become somewhat independent in their reading ability.

I. I. I.

Announcing Children's Books for Spring

Coming in March

RED MITTENS

By Laura Bannon

Little Joe's beautiful red mittens were lost! Simple, humorous text and beautiful pictures tell about their recovery by one of Joe's friends, the wide-awake cow. (Ages 4-8) **$1.50**

THE TIGER AND THE RABBIT

and other tales

By Pura Belpré — Illus. by Kay Peterson Parker

Here is a collection of folk tales chosen from the favorite stories of Puerto Rican children and told with the rich, tropical flavor acquired from years of use by native storytellers. (Ages 8-12) **$1.75**

Coming in April

A CABIN FOR CRUSOE

By David Severn — Illus. by Ursula Koering

This rollicking English story will delight young Americans with its gay description of the misadventures of four lively English children and their unwelcome guest. (Ages 8-12) **$2.00**

GIGI IN AMERICA

The Further Adventures of a Merry-Go-Round Horse

By Elizabeth Foster — Illus. by Phyllis N. Coté

Poor Gigi! Stranded in Old Orchard, Maine, he feared he would never see his beloved Lili again. But aided by gypsy friends and loyal Rat, he travelled to Central Park and made a wonderful discovery. (Ages 8-12) **$2.00**

MISS EMILY

By Jean Gould — Illus. by Ursula Koering

A beautifully written biography for older girls, the story of Emily Dickinson, of her life in a little New England town a hundred years ago, and her inner rebellion against its rigid conventions. (Ages 12-16) **$2.50**

COME, JACK!

By Robert W. McCulloch — Illus. by Duncan Coburn

Laid in the untamed Nebraska prairie country of the 1880's, this is the unsentimental story of a fierce dog's fight for survival and his devotion to a young pioneer lad. (Ages 12-16) **$2.50**

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